E Hawes
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AN

ESSAY

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ON

LIBERTY AND NECESSITY:

In Anſwer to AUGUSTUS TOPLADY's Tract, on (WHAT HE CALLS) "*Chriſtian* and *Philoſophical Neceſſity* aſſerted."

IN WHICH

JOHN WESLEY's "*Thoughts* on *Neceſſity*" are examined and defended; the Difficulties of theſe Subjects rendered plain and eaſy to common Readers; and *Human Liberty* fully proved.

K

By *PHILARETUS.*

Quis non clamet ſtultum eſſe Præcepta dare ei, cui LIBERUM non eſt quod præcipitur facere: et INIQUUM eſſe eum damnare, cui non fuit POTESTAS juſſa complere.
AUGUST. lib. de Fid. cont. Manich. cap. 10.

Nemo peccat in eo quod vitare non poteſt. *Idem.*

Diſcover the Secret intruſted with you.—I will not, for that is in my power. But I will throw thee into chains if thou doſt not.—Man! What doſt thou ſay? Me wilt thou fetter? My Feet thou may: but my PURPOSE not Jupiter himſelf can overcome. EPICT.

I call Heaven and Earth to record this day—that I have ſet before you Life and Death—therefore CHUSE *Life, that—thou may live.*
Deut. xxx, 19.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE first day of the month called August, the London Review (for the preceding month) brought me an account of a work entitled, "The Scheme of CHRISTIAN and PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY asserted: By AUGUSTUS TOPLADY." *Upon reading the quotations from this work, in the Review, and the observations of the Reviewers on the Stile and Subject of it; I found my mind much concerned, that an opinion, which seemed to me, subversive of all moral obligation, and destructive of all religion; should be asserted with such confidence; and the Truth not argued, but banter'd out of countenance, in support of that, which every man, as soon as he understands, must detest as horrible. I did not however* immediately *determine to concern myself about it in any public manner; but finding my mind still continue exercised on the subject, I at length procured*

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his book, and set myself to examine it: the result of which examination, the Reader will find in the following pages, which I hope will clearly shew him whether the doctrine of absolute Necessity, *or that of* Free-Agency, *be most conformable to sound Reason, and to Scripture.*

It is true, the arguments adduced in favour of the Necessity *of all human actions, are sometimes very subtle. The Scheme is curiously wove, of threads that are finely spun; tho' indeed I cannot say, that our Author is a fine Workman; nor has he any thing of value that is* new; *his chief business having been to collect what has been said before by others, and to apply the arguments, to the purpose of opposing the propositions he had undertaken to refute. I apprehend, however, the reader will find in the following pages, that this Writer's* materials *are far from being good, and that they are extremely ill put together, and unskilfully applied in many instances; so that before this Gentleman appears in this way again, I humbly propose that he may serve another apprenticeship, either at school or at Oxford.*

There was one thing, I confess which puzzled me some time to understand the reason of. I found that our Author's orthography in certain words, was constantly wrong, and, according to the present *acceptation of words, sometimes made perfect nonsense; though it was easy to understand what he meant. Thus he says* "dye" *for*

die,

die, "ſuccede" *for* ſucceed; "præmiſſes" *for* premiſes*, &c. *At firſt I thought theſe might be typographical errors; but finding them conſtantly ſpelt in the ſame manner, I found that could not be the caſe. At length I recollected, that his work was* in oppoſition *to* John Weſley: *ſo I concluded he* might poſſibly *chooſe to ſpell his words* wrong, *becauſe* John Weſley *had ſpelt his words* right.

Extremes of prejudice, either for or againſt a perſon or thing, are always unreaſonable, and in ſome caſes dangerous. Sometimes indeed we may laugh at them; as when a man ſays on another occaſion, Mallem cum Lillio errare, quam cum aliis rectè ſentire: *And on the contrary; as in the preſent caſe, when* Auguſtus Toplady *chooſes rather to talk nonſenſe, than to ſpeak ſenſe with* John Weſley.

On theſe occaſions indeed, one can ſcarcely forbear laughter; but when a man ſtrikes at the foundation

* *Perhaps it will be ſaid, that theſe words are thus ſpelt in alluſion to the words from which they are derived. This indeed* may *be the caſe in the words* ſucceed *and* premiſes, *which are derived from the Latin* ſuccedo *and* præmiſſa; (*unleſs we muſt ſay, that the word* ſucceed *comes from the French* ſucceder, *which is ſtill from the Latin word above-mentioned.*) *But this cannot poſſibly be the caſe in the word* die, *which is derived from the Saxon* deadian, *and is a word entirely different from* dye, *both in ſenſe and orthography. To* die, *ſignifies to loſe all the animal functions, and have the ſoul ſeparated from the body: To* dye, *is to ſtain cloth. Nor do I know a Writer of any note, ſince the refinement of our language, that confounds theſe two words together; ſuch confuſion, according to the preſent mode of writing, making the moſt egregious nonſenſe.*

of all that is good; when he propagates doctrines, which make the ever bleſſed God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, *the author and cauſer of all evil---out of revenge to a man whom he mortally hates; it is high time to be ſerious, and to acquaint the world that a man of ſuch mean principles ought not to be regarded.*

I can with truth ſay, I do not engage in this controverſy, from any motives excited by party-prejudice. Indeed I have not the leaſt connexion with either of the parties concerned in this debate. I have no perſonal knowledge of Auguſtus Toplady; *I ſhould not know his perſon were I to ſee him; and on the other hand, I am not a* methodiſt. *I do not attend any of their places of worſhip, altho' I eſteem them as a very uſeful, religious body of people. I cannot therefore be ſuppoſed to act under the influence of a party, but only from a love of the Truth: and for this reaſon it is, that I have deſignedly paſſed over, all the ſcurrility and abuſe this writer has in general thrown out againſt his antagoniſt, (and indeed they are too mean for a man of any character to take notice of;) except where my argument ſeemed to require me to take ſome notice of them: and when John Weſley ſees theſe Remarks appear in public, he will no more know who is the author of them than Auguſtus Toplady himſelf.*

It is not any man then, that I engage to defend, but Truth and Virtue. This I declare to the world is my only view. Yet I ſhould not be aſhamed to defend the character of this truly great man (whom Providence has made more uſeful to mankind by

much

much, than any man of the present age) where Truth and Virtue are so closely connected with him. For however I may differ from him in other respects, (and, differ from him I do, in some particulars) yet I fully agree with him in this. And he who does not defend a man who is injured, (especially when the cause of Virtue is connected with him) if Tully *taught sound morals,* tam est in vitio, quam si parentes, aut amicos, aut patriam deserat; *is as guilty as he who deserts his* parents, *his* friends, *or his* country.

Whether we admit or deny the popular doctrine of the sensible qualities of matter, it will not affect the present question; I have therefore taken no notice of our Author's dissertation on that subject.

I have not signed my proper name, but a name significant of what I would defend. 'Tis virtue I love, and virtue rightly founded on Christ in us *the Hope of Glory, I desire to promote and encourage. I know the Poet's observation is just,*

"*The Critics each advent'rous Author scan,*
"*And* praise *or* censure, *as they love the Man.*

For this reason I have thought it best, on this occasion, to conceal my name from the publick, that my arguments may stand, or fall by their own merit. That no one may believe them true, thro' a regard for their author, nor any one deem them inconclusive, thro' prejudice to a name, without duly considering them.

In the following remarks, I have used great plainness of speech; 'tis consistent with my character

and profession. But I hope the Reader will find nothing low, or inconsistent with decency and good manners. I therefore think, I may adopt what Horace *says of himself, with much more propriety than this writer has done,*

Quod VERUM atque DECENS, curo, et rogo,
et omnis in hoc sum.

*He has it is true, been applauded * for his attachment to the* VERUM; *but for what reason it would puzzle a man to find out: and I believe the candid, attentive Reader, will think with me, that our Author's conclusions have no more to do with the* VERUM, *than his language has with the* DECENS.

Subjects of this kind, have too generally been treated in a confused and abstruse manner, and with an affectation of learning that has rendered them almost wholly unintelligible to persons of a common education. I hope I have avoided this, without falling into the opposite extreme of meanness and lowness. And if the following Essay be found as plain and intelligible to every *one, as the nature of the subject will admit of; and if it become the means of dispelling the shades of darkness and error, and of diffusing the light of truth among men, in ever so small a degree; so that a subject of so much importance to the interests of religion and virtue, may become better known and understood; the Author will have obtained his desired reward; and have the satisfaction to think, that he has faithfully discharged a duty which he believed providence called him unto.*

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* Vid. London Review for July, 1775. page 53.

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ESSAY, &c.

CHAPTER I.

Our Author's definition of Free-ageney refuted—True definition of Free-agency given: and its inconsistency with absolute Necessity proved.

TO the question, "Is man a Free-agent, or is he not?" This Author answers, "Without all doubt he is, "in a vast variety of cases. Nor "did I ever in conversation or reading meet with "a person who denied it."

"But let us (says he) by defining as we go, as-"certain what Free-agency is. All needless re-"finements apart, Free-agency is neither more nor "less than *voluntary* Agency."——It is hard to tell what this Author intends by this definition. Certainly he cannot be ignorant, that the persons whom he opposes, give a very different definition of Free-agency; and such as, in a philosophical sense, stands opposed to his scheme of Necessity: otherwise, why does he contend with them? Ought he not then to have distinguished the several senses of the word Free-agency, and have shewed in which sense, he

he denyed, and in which he admitted it, as belonging to Man? For ſurely he would not be thought to allow Free-agency in the ſame ſenſe in which his opponents contend for it! This would be to render his whole book uſeleſs, even in his own account of it, and to put himſelf in company with many of the moſt famous chriſtian worthies, both ancient and modern, together with *John Weſley*; which, if we may judge from his whole manner, he would deem the greateſt calamity that could poſſibly befall him, either in this world or another.

In order to judge truly of this definition, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that this writer uſes the words *voluntary* and *Volition* very ambiguouſly; which is unpardonable in a definition. For he means by volition, not only the final perception of the underſtanding, by which one thing is diſcerned as preferable, i. e. as more fit to be done, than another, with the ſenſation accompanying it; but alſo the firſt exertion of the *ſelf-motive* power, which is eſſentially different from it. For the one is merely *paſſive*; the other is *active:* Theſe ought therefore to have been carefully diſtinguiſhed; as by thus confounding them together, and ſuppoſing the *will*, taken in this vague ſenſe, to be neceſſarily determined in all its volitions, he has confounded all diſtinction between *action* and *paſſion*, and makes all patient and no agent throughout the whole univerſe; which is plainly abſurd.

When therefore he tells us that "whatever the "ſoul does with the *full bent of preference and deſire*, "in that the ſoul acts freely." Nothing more can juſtly be meant, than that the ſoul is carried along chearfully

chearfully. For whatever moves *only* by the physical efficiency of some extrinsic cause, is incapable of action. And if the soul be, by such an influence, pushed on to all its volitions and actions, by an indissoluble concatenation of causes, *sicut unda impellitur undâ*, it is most evident that neither agency nor freedom can be attributed to man, any more than to the waves which lash the shore. Nor will the concomitancy of perception and a grateful sensation, in the least alter the case. For let us suppose the waves endued with a perception of their own motion, and that they swell and foam, and break in heavy thunder, against the lofty cliffs, with vast pleasure and delight; yet we could not with any propriety of speech call them agents. And if there be any such concatenation of causes, which as necessarily produce, and bring to pass, every volition, and action of man, as wave impells wave; he can no more be an agent than the waves of the sea.

Our author then by this definition takes away all power of agency from man, and makes him a mere patient: he leaves him no power to act, but only that of being acted upon. For a power to act, necessarily implies, a power not to act at the same time; otherwise it is not acting, but only a suffering the influence of some superior force, and is no more an action than the falling of a stone, or the motion of the sea. And by thus taking away the possibility of action from man, he has taken away all freedom from him too; for a being that cannot act at all, can never be said to act freely. It appears then, that the word *voluntary* cannot properly mean free, but

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only a chearful acquiescence in Necessity; and the word agency has no meaning at all, or if it mean any thing the definition must be a contradiction in terms.

Yet this gentleman tells us, he is fond of definitions. I could wish, for the sake of his own character, we had some better evidence of it, than his bare word. For were this the case, he would certainly have studied them much better than he has done; at least, I am sure he ought to have *understood* them better, before he had offered them to the publick.

In order to understand the subject before us, and the force of the arguments on each side the question, it is necessary to enquire, what the true definition of Free-agency is, as it is contended for, in the following pages.

Free-agency then, or Liberty, stands opposed to *Necessity*. Necessity is distinguished into *physical* and *moral*. By a *physical necessity*, a stone falls, fire burns, and the sun gives light. It is something which arises from the *absolute* nature of the thing itself, so that a cause which operates by a *physical necessity*, uniformly produces the same effect, except in some cases, where an extrinsic compulsory force is able to restrain its operation. By a *moral necessity*, I mean, that force or influence, which the *fitness* of things when viewed, has on the minds of *moral* agents. This is manifestly different from a *physical* necessity. For *moral* causes do not operate as *physical* ones do; their influence constantly varying, according to the state of the mind affected by them; so that they may, and often do exist *without* those effects, which at other times they may be said to produce, even

even when there is no extrinſic compulſory force to prevent their operation. It is only in a metaphorical ſenſe therefore, that this can be called a neceſſity; for, philoſophically ſpeaking, it is *no neceſſity* at all, nor any ways inconſiſtent with natural Liberty.*

In oppoſition to a phyſical neceſſity, (which is the only neceſſity inconſiſtent with liberty in a philoſophical ſenſe) a Being is ſaid to be *free*, when it is αυτοκινητον, ſelf-moved, i. e. not moved by the *phyſical* influence of any other being. And this το αυτοκινητον, or *principle* of ſelf-motion, (in man) *eſſentially* connected with reaſon and underſtanding, is the very eſſence of human liberty. This, conſidered ſimply as a ſelf-motive power, is Firſt, liberty in *oppoſition* to a ſuppoſed *phyſical neceſſity* of human action ariſing from a concatenation of cauſes, by Cicero called, *neceſſitas fati*, *aut cauſarum ſeries ſempiterna*. Secondly, conſidered as connected with underſtanding and a *moral* ſenſe, it is liberty of *indifference*. Now liberty of *indifference*, is uſually diſtinguiſhed into a liberty of *contradiction*, and a liberty of *contrariety*. Liberty of contradiction is a power of chooſing to act, or not to act, in any given inſtance. Liberty of contrariety is a power of chooſing, when two actions are propoſed, to do either of them.

That there muſt be ſomewhere ſuch a thing as liberty of action, or ſelf-motion, may be demonſtrated *ab Abſurdo*, as otherwiſe there could be no agent,

* The Reader ſhould be particularly attentive to this diſtinction between phyſical and moral neceſſity. A diſtinction evidently founded in the nature of things. And if we carefully examine our Author's arguments, we ſhall find, they only conclude in favour of the latter.

agent, nor self-mover in the universe, but an eternal chain of effects without any cause, which is a manifest contradiction. "For the beginning of "motion must be from some thing which is self-"moved; since otherwise all nature must stand still, "without any force or energy to put it in mo-"tion." And if there must be some being that is possessed of liberty, then liberty is no impossible thing; and if liberty be possible, and communicable (which it evidently is) then man *may* be possessed of it: and if man *may* be possessed of it, experience and reason will shew, that he *actually does* possess it. To this, the advocates for fate answer; No. For says our author; "He alone can be a self-"determining agent, who is *quite independent*, on "any other agent, or agency whatever."‡— Now this is just as true as if I should say; there can be no agent in the universe, but the Deity; for to act, necessarily implies *independence*, and *self-existence*. Because whatever being is *incapable* of motion, 'till impelled by some other being; is totally *incapable* of action.

"I acquiesce, (says this writer §) in the old "distinction of necessity into a *necessity* of com-"pulsion, and a *necessity* of infallible certainty.— "The *necessity* of *compulsion* is predicated of *in-"animate* bodies; as we say of the earth (for "instance) that it circuits the sun by compulsory "necessity: and in some cases, of *reasonable beings* "themselves; viz. when they are forced to do or "suffer any thing, contrary to their will and "choice.—The necessity of infallible *certainty* is of

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‡ Page 52. § Page 14.

" a very different kind, and only renders the event " inevitably future, without any compulsory force " on the will of the agent."

But let us mind the *consistency* of this writer. " Necessity of infallible certainty," says he, " is of " a very different kind (from compulsory necessity,) " and only renders the event future *without any* " compulsory *force* on the will." — But notwithstanding this he tells us,* " The senses are *necessa-* " *rily* impressed by every object from without; and " as *necessarily* commove the fibres of the brain; " by which nervous commotion ideas are *necessarily* " communicated to the soul; and by the judgment " the soul *necessarily* frames of those ideas the will " is *necessarily* inclined to act or not to act." And again,† " Neither is *material* nature alone, *bound* " *fast in fate.* All other things, the *human will* " itself not excepted, are *no less* tightly bound."— Now these are all instances of compulsory necessity. For our senses are impressed, and ideas communicated to the soul, &c. by the very *same necessity*, by which the earth circuits the sun. And the will is here said to be under the same *compulsory* necessity, as, *material nature* itself, in its determination to act; in express contradiction to his definition.

And all this writer's arguments drawn from philosophy, proceed upon a supposition of such a physical, or compulsory force on the will, in all our actions; the only difference he makes between a man's acting against his inclination, or with it, is this; that in the one case, the compulsion is external, and falls on the outward action, in opposition to the bent of

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* Page 22. † Page 64.

the mind; in the other, the compelling force is within, and neceſſarily determines the Inclination and Will; ſo that in both caſes man is equally under a *compelling*, *neceſſitating* force, and conſequently is equally deprived of freedom. Our author therefore, by pretending to allow freedom to man's will, and yet grounding all his arguments in favour of fate, on a ſuppoſition of its being under the influence of a compelling, neceſſitating power, cuts off the force of all his concluſions at once, and renders his whole book a contradiction.

Nor does this writer only confound the diſtinction between a phyſical and moral neceſſity, but alſo the *different* kinds of *certainty* which ariſe from them. I have already ſhewed that there is a real diſtinction between them in the nature of things, and by now conſidering the different kinds of certainty which ariſe from them, the fallacy of many of his arguments will be made manifeſt; and that ridiculous rant which ornaments many parts of his book, will be clearly, expoſed.

A *phyſical* certainty, is what ariſes from the *abſolute* nature and properties of things. To ſuppoſe the contrary would be, not an *hypothetical*, but an *abſolute* contradiction. In itſelf it admits of no variation or degrees; and one demonſtration is equally *certain* as one hundred.

Moral certainty, ariſes from the force and influence which the fitneſs of things with all their concomitant circumſtances when viewed, has on the minds of free-agents. Here, to ſuppoſe the contrary would be, not a *natural*, tho' it might be an hypothetical contradiction. To created minds it admits

admits of various degrees, the highest of which approaches next to demonstration, and in some cases is infallible.

For example. In this proposition; *The three angles of a right lined triangle are equal to two right ones.* Here, to suppose the contrary would be, not an *hypothetical*, but an *absolute* contradiction, founded on the real nature of the thing; and one demonstration gives the highest degree of certainty.

Again, in this proposition, *God will not again destroy the world by water.* Here the certainty arises from the regard that God has to his promise. To suppose the contrary would be, not a *natural*, but an *hypothetical* contradiction. The degrees of this certainty, are in proportion to the degrees of evidence that God has so promised, conjoined with the evidence we have from reason and revelation, that he is a God of truth.

Nothing can give us a clearer evidence of the truth of this distinction, than the instance before us. We all see, it is no natural contradiction, to suppose that God may again destroy the world by water; for no one will say, that God has not the same natural power now, as he had in the days of Noah; but it is an hypothetical contradiction: that is, on supposition that God be a God of truth, it is a contradiction to say, that he will again drown the world.

Again. I say it is *impossible* that the three angles of a right lined triangle, should not be equal to two right angles. But this impossibility arises from the *abstract* nature of a right lined triangle, and is a *physical* impossibility. But the impossibility

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that God ſhould again deſtroy the world by water, is not founded on the *abſtract* nature of the divine power, but on his being a God of Truth: and this regard to his promiſe, does neither deſtroy nor diminiſh the divine power, but only prevent the exertion of it, after a *certain* manner. This therefore is not a phyſical but a *moral* impoſſibility.

COROLLARIES.

1. Hence it follows, that things in their *moral* influence, admit of a *certainty* of the event, when there is a *phyſical* poſſibility of its happening otherwiſe.

2. As this certainty is infallible in a *finite* mind, when the event reſpects the conduct of a perfect being; ſo it is always infallible in the *omniſcient* mind, when it relates to any frail and imperfect nature whatever.

3. Hence it appears, that God may know all the actions and circumſtances of men, with *infallible certainty*, even on a ſuppoſition that they are poſſeſſed of *philoſophical* liberty; i. e. have a power to act otherwiſe than they do.

Notwithſtanding this writer makes a diſtinction between a compulſory neceſſity and a neceſſity of infallible certainty; the latter of which he applies to man in his definition: yet he manifeſtly confounds them throughout his whole book. Thus, he ſays, "Neither is material nature alone bound faſt "in fate. All other things, the human mind it-"ſelf, not excepted, are no leſs tightly bound." And, page 66, after quoting a paſſage out of one

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of the prophets (Is. x. 15.) he cries out in triumph§, "What, is man comparable to an *axe*, to "a *saw*, to a *rod*; not one of which can operate "or so much as move, but in proportion as 'tis "acted upon? This is worse than being likened "to *clock-work*; but who can help it?"——It is evident by this, that he supposes the mind of man, no more capable of motion than a piece of matter, 'till impelled by some exterior force; and consequently it is under as strict a *compulsory* necessity in all its volitions, as matter is in its motions.

Let me just remark here, that this text does not compare man to an Axe, to a Saw, or to a Rod, in any other sense than as an instrument, whereby God often brings about his purposes among mankind. But this is no ways inconsistent with the doctrine of free-agency. The supposition of a self-motive power in man, hinders not, but he may be under the government of a wise and gracious providence. It is true, it requires much greater wisdom to guide and govern a free-agent, than to guide and govern an *axe* or a *saw*; the one is level with the capacity of feeble man, the other is worthy the wisdom of the ever blessed God. But because we cannot see how God can do more than man can do, must we therefore rashly deny it? Beside, the very supposition that man is no more capable of self-motion than an *axe*, or a *saw*, will very much weaken, if not wholly overthrow, every argument for the natural immortality of the soul. But to return.

§ Page 65, 66.

Our author likewise confounds the above different kinds of certainty; and positively asserts, that whatever, "is not certainly future, (i. e. "whatever does not come to pass by a *physical* necessity) is not certainly fore-knowable;" and can, "only at the very most be *uncertainly* guess'd "at, as not improbable."‖—Now what is this, but plainly saying, there is no *medium* between a physical or mathematical certainty, and the *lowest* degree of probability? Which all the world, except this Writer, knows to be a mistake.

One might here with much propriety ask this gentleman, whether he has no *knowledge* of any thing, but what he can demonstrate with mathematical certainty? whether he only *uncertainly* guesses at every other thing, as only probable at the very most? He is very confident that *knowledge* can stand on none but *such certain* ground.‡ May we not then presume, that *Augustus Toplady knows* but very few things? 'Tis very natural to enquire, how he knows, that God is to be worshipped; that the scripture is the word of God, or that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin? How does he know that Christ died for the sins of the world? or any other article of the christian revelation? or an hundred other things, of the utmost importance to religion and the welfare of mankind? Must he not answer, upon the principles here laid down, that he "only uncertainly guesses at them as not improbable?" That is, he must gravely address his audience thus: "It "is not improbable, my dear hearers, that you "ought to worship God. For I guess, tho' not "*certainly*,

‖ Page 75. ‡ Ibid.

"*certainly*, that the ſcripture which commands it, "was dictated by the ſpirit of truth. I think "likewiſe, but I have no certain ground for know-"ing it, that there was ſuch a perſon as Jeſus "Chriſt, but 'tis impoſſible for either me or you "*certainly* to know, whether he died for the ſins of "the world, or whether any man can ever receive "any benefit from him," &c. &c. Truly this is a noble doctrine, and likely to do much good in the world! How worthy would theſe declarations be, of a man who calls himſelf a *miniſter* of Chriſt, and a *teacher* of the people! But however this doctrine may ſuit a *country* Parſon at *Broad-Hembury*, the world is not yet corrupt enough, to ſwallow it down with approbation.

Let not any one imagine, that this is ſtraining a conſequence beyond what is fairly implied in the premiſes. It moſt clearly and immediately follows, from the principles here laid down, to prove his favourite ſcheme of neceſſity. For, if "Knowledge "will ſtand on none but *certain* ground," i. e. if nothing is knowable but what is *phyſically certain*; and if whatever be not known with ſuch a certainty, can only, "at the very moſt, be uncertainly gueſſed "at, as not improbable;" then it undeniably follows, that there is no medium between a phyſical certainty and a bare probability; conſequently whatever is not phyſically certain, can only "at "the very moſt be uncertainly gueſſed at." But let me aſk, which of the fore-mentioned articles he can prove, with a phyſical or a mathematical certainty? Is it not beyond the poſſibility of contradiction,

diction, that not one of them can admit of ſuch an evidence? He can only then, *uncertainly* gueſs at them. For if there be no *medium*, between a phyſical certainty, and a bare probability; I defy either *Auguſtus Toplady*, or any other perſon, to go an ace beyond the point of bare conjecture in the above articles—There is this comfort however ariſes from it, that as this author does not know the things that he has written to be true; but, according to his own principles, muſt only have *uncertainly* gueſs'd at them; ſo he cannot reaſonably expect, that his readers ſhould *certainly* believe them; and therefore man may yet be poſſeſſed of liberty, for any thing this writer has ſaid to the contrary. But let us now proceed to ſome of his illuſtrations, whereby he *gueſſes* that the doctrine of neceſſity may be true.

"It was *infallibly certain*, that Judas would be-
"tray Chriſt: he was therefore a *neceſſary*, though
"a *voluntary* actor in that tremendous buſineſs."†—
I anſwer; it was *certain*, with a *moral* certainty; but this may well conſiſt with a power in man to act otherwiſe than he does; conſequently, this concludes nothing againſt human liberty.—"He was
"therefore a *neceſſary*, though a *voluntary* actor in
"that tremendous buſineſs."—Our author conſtantly ſuppoſes, that whatever a man does with the conſent of his will, he does freely; and yet affirms that the *will* is under the ſame *compelling* force in all its volitions, as matter is in its motions. How conſiſtent this is, the reader will eaſily determine, from what has been ſaid above.—"He was there-
"fore

† Page 14.

" fore a *neceſſary* actor," &c. It has already been proved, that whatever cannot move, but by the *phyſical* impulſe of ſome other being, is totally incapable of action. A " *neceſſary* actor" is therefore a contradiction in terms.

Second Queſtion. Are man's actions free or neceſſary? ‡ Our author anſwers, " They may be at " one and the ſame time, free and neceſſary too."—Now this is ſaying, that man may have a *ſelf-motive* power, and yet be unable to move *himſelf*, at one and the ſame time; which is plainly abſurd. But he will prove it—

Let us ſee how. Why, " When a man is very " hungry or very tired, he is *neceſſarily*, and yet " *freely* diſpoſed to food or reſt."—I anſwer. Being hungry, or tired, is no action, 'tis a mere *paſſive* ſenſation, and can have nothing to do with the freedom of action, being different, *toto genere*, from it. But " He can no more *help* being ſo diſpoſed, " than a falling ſtone can help tending to the " earth."—I anſwer, very true. Becauſe he is altogether as *paſſive* in thoſe ſenſations, as a ſtone is in falling; the *one* being no more an action than the other. " But here lies the grand difference. " The ſtone is a *ſimple* being, conſiſting of matter " only: and conſequently can have no *will*, either " to riſe or fall.—Man is a *compound* being, made up " of matter and ſpirit. Conſequently his will is con- " cerned in ſitting down to dinner, or in courting " repoſe, when *neceſſity* impells to either."—Now the grand difference between a ſtone and a man, in this

‡ Page 15.

this instance, is only this; that man is endued with perception: which cannot alter the case. For perception is here, only a *consciousness* of what happens to the body, without any influence upon it; and man is left as *wholly* passive, as if he had no *will* or perception at all. These passive sensations, therefore, have no more to do with the present question of the freedom of action, than *rest* has to do with motion, or sitting still with walking; which is nothing at all.

The true state of the case is this. We are *necessarily* impressed in certain circumstances, with the sensations of hunger, and of weariness. These sensations, afford the mind a grateful occasion of exerting its self-motive power; which it *freely* does, with much more satisfaction, than if it was exempt from such impressions.

But here are other proofs, of infinitely more strength, which he just mentions, *en passant*, that he may put the matter beyond a doubt.

"It was necessary, 1. That the MESSIAH should "be *invariably holy* in all his ways, and righteous in "all his works." Answer. When we consider that Christ was possessed of the spirit of truth and holiness, without measure, we must say, he was under the same necessity of being holy in all his ways, and righteous in all his works, that God is to keep his promise, in not destroying the world again by water. This is manifestly a *moral*, not a physical necessity; yet in a perfect being this will rise to a perfect *infallible* certainty of the event, tho' in *physics* it be no necessity at all. This also secures a liberty of choice; so that Christ *determined himself* to

act

act in all things according, to the rectitude of his pure nature. And in *his* ſtate of rectitude and purity, it was *infallibly certain*, that he would do ſo: and there was the greateſt degree of a *moral* impoſſibility that he ſhould do otherwiſe. But if we ſuppoſe Chriſt under a *phyſical* neceſſity in all that he did, then, we ſuppoſe him to move by the compelling, neceſſitating influence of ſome ſuperior power: and in this caſe to ſay, that Chriſt either acted *freely*, or that he acted at all, is the ſame contradiction as to ſay, that he *moved himſelf* (which would have been freedom of action,) but yet he *could not* move, but by the *neceſſitating* influence of ſome ſuperior power; (which is neceſſity), and that *paſſively* ſuffering ſuch a compelling influence was performing an action: The abſurdity of which is viſible to every one.

We are told * that, "Upon the Arminian ſcheme "it invincibly follows, that it was poſſible for "Chriſt himſelf to have fallen from grace by ſin, "and to have periſhed everlaſtingly." I anſwer. There was no other poſſibility of that, than there is that God may break his promiſe and again drown the world; which has the greateſt degree of a moral impoſſibility attending it, and admits of an *infallible certainty* of the contrary.

2. "It was neceſſary that the Meſſiah ſhould die "for the ſins of the people; and though he could "not avoid being put to death as a ſacrifice for ſin, "yet he died freely." This has in effect been anſwered already, and the inconſiſtency, of an *abſolute neceſſity* with freedom, has often been proved. I ſhall only

* Page 16. In the note.

only therefore just obſerve here, that there was no *neceſſity*, ariſing from the abſolute nature of things, that Chriſt ſhould die as a ſacrifice for ſin. For no one can ſay, that God had not a power after man's tranſgreſſion, to have cut him off at once; or even by his own glorious power, that he could not *immediately* have deſtroy'd all evil, and have reſtored all nature to its original rectitude. Beſides, if there was a *phyſical neceſſity* that Chriſt ſhould die for the ſins of the people, i. e. if the neceſſity of Chriſt's death, was founded in the abſolute nature of God and of creatures: then he was not the *free gift* of God, which the ſcriptures conſtantly aſſert. I therefore conclude, that God *freely* appointed Chriſt to be our mediator, in whom alone there *ſhould be* ſalvation for loſt ſinners. And as the divine Wiſdom always chooſes and appoints that which is beſt, we may therefore ſay, that ſuch a method of ſalvation, is moſt agreeable to the divine attributes, and the beſt adapted to diſplay the divine glory: that it is beſt ſuited to God's government of the world, and to the nature and ſtate of man. But all this is a *moral neceſſity*, which leaves room for the freedom of choice; and not a *phyſical neceſſity*, which abſolutely deſtroys it.

"Though he could not avoid being put to death" —It is no wonder that this man ſhould contradict *John Weſley*, (againſt whom he ſeems to indulge a mortal antipathy,) or any other perſon; when he has the confidence to contradict Chriſt himſelf. Suppoſe this bold conjecturer had been preſent on the awful night, when our bleſſed Lord, in obedience to the divine decree, gave himſelf up to the malice of his enemies, would he not have ſaid, *Thinkeſt thou*,

(Auguſtus

(Auguſtus Toplady,) *that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he ſhall preſently give me more than twelve legions of Angels.** Our author would doubtleſs have anſwered, " I am confident thou can'ſt do no ſuch " thing. Thou art quite *miſtaken* in this matter. " Thou vainly thinkeſt thou canſt pray to thy Fa- " ther, but thou haſt no ſuch power. Thou art " faſt bound in the adamantine chains of Fate,

Vis ut nulla virum, non ipſi exſcindere ferro
Cœlicolæ valeant. Virg. Æneid. 6.

Bars, which no *force* of men, nor heavenly power itſelf, can e'er demoliſh.

So would *Auguſtus Toplady*, if conſiſtent with himſelf, have dared to inſtruct his heavenly maſter—On the contrary, I would rather modeſtly ſay, that Chriſt was under no *phyſical* neceſſity to ſuffer death, of which his own words are a ſufficient proof; but that, through the whole of this awful affair, he was under a *moral* neceſſity. A neceſſity, which the fitneſs and order of things, (in conſequence of the divine appointment,) and an amazing love for the happineſs of mankind, laid upon his holy nature. And this was *neceſſity* enough, to bring about every circumſtance of this important buſineſs, with *infallible* certainty.

" Need I add any thing more, to prove (ſays " our author) that freedom, and neceſſity are compa- " tible?"—I anſwer, Yes, a great deal. For I ſubmit it to the judgment of any impartial reader, whether all that has yet been ſaid to prove it, be not one confuſed heap of contradictions and miſtakes.

* Matt. xxvi. 53.

A neceſſity of fitneſs, harmony, and order, is indeed perfectly compatible with freedom, and may even coaleſce into abſolute uniſons with it. But this, philoſophically ſpeaking, is no neceſſity at all. Meantime *abſolute* neceſſity and freedom, can no more conſiſt with each other, than motion and reſt.

But yet the excluſion of *abſolute* neceſſity, out of the whole intelligent creation, does not introduce that *contingency* and *chance*, which our author ſeems to imagine. It does not leave every thing in the world, in the utmoſt degree of *uncertainty*. It is undeniable that things in their *moral* influence, admit of a moral *certainty*. This may riſe to ſuch a degree, as to exclude all doubt from the mind of a judicious man; and in the divine mind is always infallible. The doctrine of free-agency then, has nothing to do, with ſuch a looſe, incoherent ſtate of anarchy, as this writer ſuppoſes; nor can ſuch a ſtate exiſt *any where*, but in a mind that ſcarcely knows any thing, but by conjecture. The ſcheme then, of *freedom* of choice, in human actions, and a *moral* neceſſity, co-aleſce into abſolute uniſons with each other. They agree with reaſon and the nature of things. They harmonize with the divine attributes, and are perfectly conſonant to ſcripture and the nature of the chriſtian ſalvation. A *chriſtian* will rejoice in the experience of this truth, and *revere* the wiſdom, that laid the extenſive, harmonious plan, through all intelligent nature. Philoſophy † itſelf, chearfully acquieſces in the divine appointment, and wants to riſe no higher.

CHAP.

† That is, Philoſophy under the conduct of, and in harmony with, divine revelation.

CHAP. II.

Of the connection subsisting between Soul and Body:—of Ideas:—and of the connection between Motives and Actions.

JOHN WESLEY asks, (3.) "Is man *self-* "determined, or is he determined by *some other* Being?"—To which this writer answers,* "I scru- "ple not to declare, as *my* stedfast judgment, that "no man ever was, or ever will, or ever can be, "philosophically speaking, *self-determined* to any "one action, be that action what it may."

The word *my*, in this sentence, will doubtless have much weight, and go far toward settling the point, when we consider the principles of certainty this author has laid down in his book, which have been examined in the preceding chapter. But let us proceed to his proof.

"There is no *medium* between MATTER and SPI- "RIT. These two divide the whole universe be- "tween them. Even in man's present *complex* state, "tho' body and soul constitute one compositum: yet "are the two component principles, not only dis- "tinct, but essentially different from each other. "Their *connection*, tho' astonishingly intimate, oc- "casions no *mixture* nor *confusion* of this with that."

"Notwithstanding which, the nature of their "junction is such, that they reciprocally *act upon* "each other. A man breaks a limb; or is wound- "ed. The body, and the body *alone*, receives the

 "injury;

* Page 18.

" injury: (i, e. receives the *immediate* ſtroke, or
" impreſſion from the external body) but the injury
" is no ſooner received, than it operates on the
" ſoul. For it is the *Soul* only which *feels* pleaſure
" or pain, through the medium of the bodily or-
" gans. Matter can no more *feel* or *perceive*, than
" it can read or pray."

" If therefore the ſoul is the feeling principle,
" or ſole ſeat of perception; it follows,—that the
" ſoul is no leſs *dependent* on the body, for a very
" conſiderable portion of its—phyſical happineſs or
" miſery: than the body is on the ſoul, for it's
" inſtrumental ſubſerviency to the will.—Conſe-
" quently the ſoul is—*neceſſarily* determined to take
" as much care of the body, as in its preſent
" views it deems requiſite:—(i. e. to obtain plea-
ſure or avoid pain)—becauſe the ſoul is *conſcious* of
" its dependence on that machine, as the inlet and
" channel of pleaſing or of diſagreeable ſenſations.
" So that in this very extenſive inſtance, man's
" *volitions* are ſwayed this way or that, to the right
" hand or to the left, by conſiderations drawn
" from the circumſtance of that *neceſſary* depen-
" dence on the body, which the ſoul cannot poſſibly
" raiſe itſelf ſuperior to, while the mutual connec-
" tion ſubſiſts."

The premiſes I grant are good; we may admit them as clear truths without ſcruple; but where to find the concluſion, I cannot tell: this ſeems to me a difficult thing. The argument proceeds thus. The ſoul *neceſſarily* depends on the body for many of its pleaſures and pains,

It is *conſcious* of its neceſſary dependence on that machine, as the inlet of thoſe pleaſing or diſagreeable ſenſations. There-

Therefore man is *neceſſarily* determined in every action that reſpects the body, by the conſideration of that *neceſſary* dependence.

But where is this concluſion to be found in either of theſe premiſes? I declare, I cannot diſcover the leaſt ſhadow of it. Perhaps this writer will ſay, "If "our pleaſures and pains, in certain circumſtances, "be neceſſary, then our actions will be neceſſary "too." I anſwer, then the argument muſt proceed thus.

We *neceſſaily* receive pleaſures and pains through the *medium* of the bodily organs: But

There is a *neceſſary connection*, between the pleaſures and pains ſo received, and the actions that reſpect the body:

Therefore man's actions reſpecting the body, are *neceſſarily* determined by thoſe pleaſing or diſagreeable ſenſations.

Now the minor propoſition is a manifeſt *petitio principii*, or begging the queſtion. For where did this writer learn, that there is a *neceſſary*, *phyſical connection*, between Senſations and actions? unleſs indeed he ſuppoſes it. But this is the very queſtion in debate, and muſt *firſt* be proved, before he *can* poſſibly come at his concluſion.

It is indeed undeniable, that the ſoul is neceſſarily impreſſed with ſenſations, and receives ideas from without, by the *medium* of the bodily organs. We cannot avoid perceiving things according as they appear to the mind, tho' their appearance will often be much altered, by a greater or leſs degree of attention to them, which it is in our own power to give. Nevertheleſs, according to the appearance of things, the ſoul is neceſſarily impreſſed with pleaſing or diſagreeable ſenſations. But theſe, with reſpect

to the ſoul, are merely paſſive perceptions, otherwiſe they could not be neceſſary. And how a merely *paſſive* perception of the mind, can be the *phyſical* cauſe of an action, I confeſs I do not underſtand. It ſeems to me, juſt as reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that *reſt* is the *phyſical* cauſe of motion, as to ſay that a mere perception of the mind, ſhould be the *phyſical efficient* cauſe of an Action.

Our author now proceeds to the doctrine of ideas, concerning which, and the theory of our ſenſations; he has ſome expreſſions inexcuſably looſe and inaccurate. Thus "An Idea (ſays he,§) is that *image*, "*form*, *or conception* of any thing, which the ſoul "is impreſſed with from without. I cannot conſi-"der reflection as properly the ſource of any new "ideas;—The ſenſes (therefore) are the *only* doors "by which ideas, i. e. the rudiments of all know-"ledge‡, find their way to the ſoul—Hence the "ſoul cannot ſee, if the eyes are deſtroyed: nor "*feel*, if the nervous functions are ſuſpended: nor "*hear*, if the organs of that ſenſe are totally im-"paired. What learn we from this? That the "ſoul, or mind is primarily and—(N. B.) *immedi-"ately*—indebted to the body, for all the *ideas*, "(and conſequently for all the *knowledge*) with "which it is furniſhed."—

Now here we are expreſſly told, 1. That we have no ideas, but what are ſtrictly and properly ideas of ſenſation, i. e. The IMAGES *or* FORMS *of things, which the the ſoul is impreſſed with from without.*

2. That

§ Page 20, 21.

‡ The inward revelation of divine things, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, is not here included.

2. That we have no knowledge of any thing, but what we have an *idea* of, by means of ſuch an impreſſion on ſome of our *outward* ſenſes. Hence he tells us, "That the ſoul is *immediately* indebted to the body, (i. e. to the outward ſenſes, for he is ſpeaking of theſe *only*, through the whole paragraph) for all the "knowledge with which it is furniſhed." But if the ſoul be *immediately* indebted to the outward ſenſes, for all its knowledge, then, the intervention of *aſſociation*, the *operation* of the mind on the ſimple ideas of ſenſation, and all *reaſoning*, are abſolutely precluded, even in our moſt refined knowledge; and we are ſhut up in a total ignorance of every thing, that is not an *immediate* object of ſome one of our five ſenſes. Now the abſurdity of this, is ſo great, one cannot help ſuppoſing, that this writer did not underſtand what he ſaid. For when this gentleman talks of neceſſity, thought, will, virtue, vice, &c. &c. 'tis natural to aſk him, (on this ſuppoſition) to which of his outward ſenſes they have made their appearance? Whether his favourite *neceſſity* be of an oblong, triangular, or circular form? Whether his thoughts be red, or blue, or yellow? And whether his will have a ſhrill or an hoarſe ſound, &c? But the thing is too ridiculous to proceed any further.

Perhaps our author *intended* to ſay, that ideas of ſenſation are the *only* ground-work of all our knowledge. According to that maxim, *nihil eſt in intellectu, quod non prius fuit in ſenſu.* So that the moſt refined knowledge man is ever poſſeſſed of, takes its riſe from thoſe ideas of ſenſation. But 'tis evident, even on this hypotheſis, that the ſoul, in its *refined*, abſtracted

abſtracted knowledge, has not an *immediate* dependence on the ideas of ſenſation, at leaſt in the form, in which they were firſt admitted into the mind, for by *means* of aſſociation, (ſay the abettors of this ſcheme) ideas of a very complex nature are formed, which become the *immediate* objects of the ſoul's contemplation.

This is probably what our author intended to ſay: but can we help admiring how differently he expreſſed himſelf, to the ſenſe he intended? He tells us, that his intention in this work, was, "To *ſhoot* folly as it *flies*." But were we to judge of this writer's abilities, as a *markſman*, by the ſpecimen of his ſkill before us, one might poſitively aſſert, that he looks ſo much aſquint, and ſhoots, ſo much at random, that even folly herſelf, (to keep up the metaphor) might *ſtand ſtill*, and laugh at his feeble attempts to do her any injury.

But even this hypotheſis, which our author *meant* to go upon, is attended with inſuperable difficulties, unleſs we ſuppoſe man to be poſſeſſed of *internal* as well as *external* ſenſes; in which caſe indeed, the ideas of ſenſation, will, very conſiſtently, become the only ground-work of all our knowledge. But to attempt to account, for all the vaſt variety of human *feelings*, by the aſſociation of ideas, without ſuppoſing an immaterial principle in man, *naturally* diſpoſed to be affected thus, or thus, by the various appearances of things, (as a certain learned gentleman does, †) is to attempt to raiſe a ſpecious gilded ſtructure, without any foundation to ſupport it; which is indeed a baſeleſs fabric, and in reality, nothing more than an imaginary caſtle in the air.

Another

† Dr. Prieſtly in his introductory Eſſays, &c. to Dr. Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind.

Another inſtance of this writer's great inattention, or great incapacity for metaphyſical diſquiſitions, occurs page 27. where ſpeaking of our ſenſations, he writes thus. "The human body is neceſſarily "incompaſſed by a multitude of other bodies: which "other ſurrounding bodies, ſo far as we come with-"in their perceivable ſphere, neceſſarily impreſs "our *nerves* with ſenſations, correſpondent to the "objects themſelves."—Impreſs our *nerves* with ſenſations! What a ſoleciſm is here! Did not *Auguſtus Toplady* tell us, a few pages above, and will not all the world tell us, that "matter can no "more *feel* or *perceive*, than it can read or pray?" How then can the *nerves* be impreſſed with ſenſations? This is giving up the immateriality of the ſoul with a witneſs, which this writer hardly intended to do.

Again. Page 30, we are told, that "all our ſenſations are but MODES of motion." Is not this making motion a real ſubſtance, and ſuppoſing it to have a phyſical exiſtence? But motion is evidently nothing more than a mode of matter. How then can that which is only a *mode* of matter, be the *ſubject* of ſenſation? But I preſume the reader, by this time, is fully ſenſible, that there can be but little dependence on the *metaphyſical* theories of a man, who talks in ſuch a looſe, *unphiloſophical* manner.

This writer, throughout this chapter, takes for granted what he ought to have proved. Becauſe ſenſations and ideas, are *neceſſarily* excited in us, by the preſence of external objects, which *neceſſarily* ſurround us; he therefore concludes, that we *neceſſarily* act, according to the motives ariſing from thoſe

ideas

ideas. But before this conclusion will follow, it must be proved that motives and reasons operate as *physical* causes, for if they do not, they can lay no *physical* necessity on human actions. But this would be to prove, that they are real *physical entities*, the absurdity of which is manifest.

But though reasons and motives, do not *necessarily* determine a man's actions, yet they are the *occasions* of action: and every rational being, will so much the more *determine itself* to act, according to the most rational motive, as it is itself more rational and perfect. We cannot say then, that man is *necessarily* determined to act, this way or that, by his ideas, and views of things; but that he freely *determines himself* to act, this way or that, (when free from external compulsion) according to those motives which are most agreeable to his disposition.

It is indeed very clear, 1. That all surrounding objects depend, for existence and operation, on God most high. 2. That by their presence, they *necessarily* cause a vibratory motion of the nerves: and that 3. this vibratory motion of the nerves, being communicated to the brain, *necessarily* causes a sensation, and excites an idea in the mind. 4. That these ideas, with the *consciousness* of pleasure or pain, &c. which they occasion in the soul, together with a *consciousness* of the operation of the mind upon them; are the only ground-work of all our natural perceptions—yet where is the consequence, that therefore man is *necessarily* determined in all his actions? I am bold to say, there is no such conclusion contained in these premises. All that any man can justly infer from

from them, is only this; that as the soul is *necessarily* impressed with sensations, and supplied with ideas; that therefore, man has *occasions* given him, to *determine himself* to act, in such a manner, as may be most for the glory of his creator; most conducive to his own good, and productive of good to his fellow creatures.

"Such however, says this writer, † is the pro-
"gression of one argument, (and 'tis but one among
"many) for the great doctrine of philosophical
"necessity. A chain, concerning which, (and especi-
"ally concerning the determination to action, b
"motives arising from ideas) *Mr. Wesley* modestly
"affirms, that it has not one good link belonging
"to it."—When *John Wesley* affirmed this, he affirmed the truth, as will be manifest to any one who will carefully examine what has been said above. And his affirming the truth with modesty, is a great addition to his character; tho' it seems to be one reason why *Augustus Toplady* is so much enraged at him; for modesty, is what this writer seems long ago, to have shook hands and parted with, and I am afraid, is in too fair a way for a lasting separation from her.

We are now arrived at a few queries, which our author proposes to the reader as *very reasonable*, and on which he appears to have a great dependence. Let us impartially examine, these pillars, of the celebrated temple, of this favourite goddess NECESSITY.

"1. How is that supposition, which ascribes a
"*self-determining will*, to a created spirit; less *absurd* than

† Page 31.

"than that ſuppoſition, which aſcribes *ſelf-exiſtence* "to matter?" †

When *Auguſtus Toplady*, can tell me, what connection there is, between the *exerciſe* of a power, given to an immortal ſpirit, by the ſupreme being, (from whom all beings derive their exiſtence and powers,) and the *ſelf-exiſtence* of matter;—I ſhall then think, this query may lay ſome claim to an Anſwer.

"2. In what reſpects is the Arminian ſuppoſition "of a *fortuitous train of events*, leſs *atheiſtical*, than "the Epicurean ſuppoſition, of a *fortuitous concourſe* "*of atoms?*"

Anſwer. I know no one, but *Auguſtus Toplady*, that ſuppoſes a *fortuitous train of events*. At leaſt the doctrine of free-agency, ſuppoſes no ſuch thing. It ſtands as much oppoſed to *chance* and *fortuitouſneſs*, as his imaginary *neceſſity* itſelf. The doctrine of free-agency, ſuppoſes man to act with *deſign*, and to *determine himſelf* in his conduct, by *certain views* of things. But this cuts off all pretence of *chance*, and *fortuitouſneſs*, from the actions of men; for chance ſtands as much oppoſed to *deſign*, as it does to *neceſſity*. But the very ſuppoſition itſelf, of a *fortuitous train of events*, is abſurd and contradictory. For the word *train* ſignifies a ſeries or order of things; but a *fortuitous order*, is a contradiction. The compariſon therefore, is ridiculous and abſurd, and juſtly deſerved no anſwer at all.

3. "If man be a *ſelf-determining* agent; will it "not neceſſarily follow, that there are as many *firſt* "*cauſes*, (i. e. in other words, as many Gods) as "there are men in the world?")

Now

† Page 31.

Now this queſtion proceeds thus. If we ſuppoſe God to have created the human ſoul, and to have endued it with a *ſelf determining* power; will it not neceſſarily follow, that man is the *firſt cauſe* of his own actions, i. e. that he *determined himſelf* to act, before God gave him the power, and before he had any exiſtence? I think this is not too difficult for the Queriſt himſelf to anſwer.

4. "Is not *independence* eſſentially pre-requiſite "to *ſelf-determination?*"

I anſwer, No. For it is the ſame thing as if I ſhould aſk; whether, if God have endued the ſoul of man with a ſelf-motive power, the exerciſe of that power, would not eſſentially pre-ſuppoſe that he had never received it? But that the *exerciſe* of a power, does not pre-ſuppoſe that a man never received that power, I think is clear to every one.

5. "But is it true in fact, and would it be ſound "PHILOSOPHY to admit, that man is an *independent being?*" This has been anſwered in the laſt article.

6. "Moreover, is the ſuppoſition of human "independence and ſelf-determination, ſound theo-"logy? At leaſt does it comport with the ſcripture "account of man?"

Anſwer. The doctrine of free-agency, no more ſuppoſes man an independent being, than it ſuppoſes that he created the world: and it perfectly comports with the ſcripture account of man. Our author however, thinks otherwiſe, and in ſupport of his opinion, refers us to the following paſſages of ſcripture (with ſeveral others quite foreign to the preſent queſtion.) *The way of man is not in himſelf: it*

is not in man that walketh, to direct his own steps§.— *Without me* (i. e. Christ) *ye can do nothing**.

We must here recollect our definition of free-agency, viz. *a self-motive power, in man, essentially connected with reason and understanding*. Now this does not suppose man, to have a power to act beyond his understanding, and the feelings of his own mind. For this *self-motive* power, is *essentially* connected with understanding, and can never be exerted, but in conjunction with some perception of the mind. Consequently, nothing can be an object of man's power, that does not come within the sphere of his ideas or feelings. Nor is this any objection against *a self-determining* power in man, respecting the things that stand proposed to the view of his mind, and that make impressions upon him. For to conclude, if I cannot determine *myself* to any actions I have no conception of, therefore, I cannot determine *myself to* any action whatsoever: would be just the same argument, as to say; If I do not this moment know what they are doing in the East-Indies, then I can have no knowledge of any thing whatsoever. Both these conclusions would be equally false. For 'tis manifest, as the one, to a man so situated, is no object of his knowledge, so the other can be no object of his power.

The *self-motive* power, then, can only be exercised about those things, which come within the sphere of a man's perceptions and knowledge. But man in his *natural* estate is ignorant of God. He has not in himself, i. e. from his fallen, corrupted nature, any inward feeling or sensation of the divine mercy and love. *The natural man receiveth not the things*

§—* Page 65, 66.

things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he KNOW *them, because they are spiritually discerned*†. These things lie quite beyond the reach of his merely *natural* perceptions. And were God, not to grant to man, an inward *supernatural* revelation, and divinely *impress* his soul with a sense of spiritual things, they would neither be any objects of his choice nor of his power. For it is by the spirit of truth alone, that man is able to discern the truth as it is in Jesus: and only by the divine presence revealed to the soul, that he can have any true sense of the divine goodness and power—But this is the free gift of God; a measure whereof is *given to every man to profit withal*, even without his own concurrence or desire. So that, on the supposition of free-agency, God is the sole author of all our *divine* knowledge, and of all the *good* that is in us. And it may with truth be asserted, in perfect consistency with this scheme, that, *The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh, to direct his own steps.*—Without the divine aid of Christ, in his spiritual influence on the mind, we can do nothing. But when, by the blessed agency of the holy spirit, the soul is awakened, to a sense of the evil of sin, and to a view of that good, and plenteous redeeming grace which is in Christ for lost sinners; then it is, that the things of God, and of our salvation, become the objects of our choice; and that *self-determining principle* in man, freely exerts its power, in receiving or refusing them. I therefore conclude that the supposition of *self-determination*, is sound theology, and perfectly comports with the scripture account of man.

† 1 Cor. ii. 14.

It appears then, that these pillars, the grand supports of this magnificent temple, are all without a foundation to stand upon. What then must be the Fabrick they are to support?——But I recollect myself. I perceive there is a strong resemblance, between this, and the famous goddess *Diana* of old; which Paul tells us, (together with other Idols) was a mere NOTHING. So that these pillars, notwithstanding they are without a foundation, may yet suffice to support, a temple, and a goddess, whose very being is only a SHADOW.

Upon a review of what has already been said, may we not soberly affirm, that the scheme of Free-agency, is *Philosophy in her right mind, and Religion in its purity?* And that the scheme of Necessity, is *Philosophy run mad, and Religion corrupted?*

CHAP. III.

Several objections to the scheme of Necessity, examined and supported.

OUR Author in this third chapter, does not immediately enter on the subject in hand, but stops a little to refresh his mind, with, what I suppose he would call, the amusements of Philosophy. These amusements I shall pass over, as being beside my present business; only I would just observe by the way; that if we may infer, from the radical simplicity, which God has observed in his works; that,

that, *in themſelves*, all human ſouls are *equal*: we may for the ſame reaſon, as well conclude, that all human bodies are *equal* too. And we might even carry this *ſimplicity* much farther, 'till we ſcarcely leave any variety in the univerſe.—But the opinion itſelf is highly improbable.

I ſhall likewiſe, in general, paſs by all the perſonal reflections, which this writer throws out againſt *John Weſley*, as being nothing to the purpoſe of the preſent argument. Nor can I think they will do any honour to *Auguſtus Toplady*. For ſuch low abuſe of a perſon, highly reſpectable both for his age and labours, and infinitely ſuperior to himſelf in every reſpect; can ſurely gain him no credit, nor do him any honour, among the ſober and thinking part of mankind.

Let us now proceed to examine, the anſwers our author has given, to the objections advanced againſt the doctrine of *abſolute neceſſity*.

Object 1. On this ſcheme, "There can be no "moral good or evil; no virtue and no vice."

On the contrary, this writer aſſerts, that there both may be, and is, moral good and evil on the ſcheme of neceſſity. "For, ſays he, if *neceſſary* "virtue, be neither *moral* nor *praiſe-worthy*; 'twill "follow, that God himſelf, who is *neceſſarily* good, "is an *immoral* being, and *not praiſe-worthy* for his "goodneſs. On the ſame principle it would alſo "follow, that Chriſt's moſt perfect obedience, "which was *neceſſary*, had *no morality* in it, was "totally *void of merit*, and entitled him to neither "*praiſe* nor *reward*."

Now, if this be a good argument, it is doubtless invincible. For we can never admit of any doctrine, that draws such horrible consequences after it. But it happens this argument is good for nothing. It proceeds thus,

Necessary virtue is neither *moral* nor *praise-worthy*,

Virtue in God is *necessary* ;

Therefore virtue in God, is neither *moral* nor *praise-worthy*.

Now this syllogism contains *four distinct terms*. For the medium, *necessary*, is equivocal, and is taken twice *particularly*; so that there are two different parts of it, with one of which, the subject of the conclusion is compared, and with the other, the predicate ; so that this argument can never prove, whether this subject and predicate agree or disagree : consequently it proves nothing at all.

For in the major proposition, a *physical* necessity is intended, but in the minor, a *moral* necessity only can be meant ; between which, there is a manifest difference ; as in the instance already adduced, that God will not again drown the world ; though 'tis undeniable he has a natural power so to do. And all our author's conclusions, drawn from this ambiguous use of the word Necessity, are quite irregular, and prove nothing ; but only tend to blind and deceive the reader, with the bare appearance of an argument.

He goes on. " The axiom, therefore, which " dares to affirm, that necessity and *moral agency* are " irreconcileable things," lays at once, an axe to " the root, both of natural and revealed religion."—

I an-

I anſwer, Not at all. It only lays an axe to the root of that ignorance, which can diſcern no difference between a *phyſical*, and a *moral* neceſſity: the former of which, is ſo far from being reconcileable to moral agency, that, where it takes place, it deſtroys all agency whatever.

† " The crucifiers of the ſon of God, perpetrated " the moſt *immoral act*, that ever was, or ever will " be committed. And yet I am expreſſly aſſured " by the written teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt, that " *Herod, and Pontius Pilate, and the people of the* " *Jews, were gathered together, againſt Jeſus, for to* " *do whatſoever God's hand, and God's counſel had fore-* " *determined to be done.* So that, upon chriſtian " principles, at leaſt, NECESSITY and MORAL EVIL, " (by the ſame rule alſo, neceſſity and MORAL " GOOD) may walk hand in hand together."—

That the *calviniſtic* interpretation of this, and ſimilar paſſages of ſcripture, cannot be true, ſeems as clear to me, as any thing that can be propoſed to my underſtanding. For to ſay, that God laid the crucifiers of Chriſt, under an *abſolute* neceſſity of committing that deed, and then blamed, and puniſhed them for doing it; is the ſame thing, as to ſay, that God *wills* a thing, and does *not will* it; that he *approves* of a thing, and does *not approve* of it, at the ſame time, and in the ſame reſpects; than which, there cannot be a more direct, and abſolute contradiction.

There was no decree, or appointment of the action of Judas, or of the other Jews concerned in the

† Page 42.

the crucifixion of our bleſſed Lord. There was no need of any ſuch decree. God foreſaw with infallible certainty, how all thoſe perſons would *determine themſelves* to act, in thoſe circumſtances, if no interpoſition of divine power prevented them. The decree, therefore, or pre-ordination of Chriſt's death, could only be this, that he *ſhould be given up* to the rage and malice of the Jews, whom God foreknew they would infallibly put to death, if left to their *own determination*. This is the only decree we read of: 'tis the only predeſtination that was neceſſary in this great affair. And this was effectually *delivering* him up unto death, to accompliſh the glorious work of man's redemption.

The meaning of the above paſſage then, is this; that the Jews and Gentiles were aſſembled together, to accompliſh thoſe ſufferings of our Saviour, which God *had foretold*; and by having fore-determined that *he ſhould be given up* to their malice and rage, (which he infallibly foreſaw would occaſion them to put him to death;) he had, to every purpoſe of accompliſhment, hereby *determined*, that thoſe things ſhould be done. So that neither this, nor any other paſſage of ſcripture can ever prove that God, by an *abſolute neceſſity*, determines man to every action he performs; for then they would not be human actions. And it would be to prove (on ſuppoſition that God puniſhes men for thoſe actions) that God both *wills* and *nills*, the ſame thing, at the ſame time, and in the ſame reſpects; which is an abſolute impoſſibility.

"The whole cavil, ſays our author†, "amounts "to

† Page 42.

"to precisely this. If God is *the alone author and* "*worker of all Good*; virtue ceases to be virtue: And, "if God is the *free-permitter* of evil, vice ceases to be vice."—These two propositions afford us, a most striking instance either of this writer's ignorance of the doctrine he would refute; or else of his disingenuity, in palming consequences upon it, which he knows have not the least connection with it. For 'tis evident, to any man of common understanding, that these propositions have no more to do with the doctrine of Free-agency, than with the resurrection of the dead.

He goes on. "In one word; those modes of "action, called *virtue* and *vice*, do not cease to be "*moral*,—be those modes occasioned by what they "may."

I am inclined to think, that this writer's *morality*, will be found upon examination, to be no better than his philosophy. Examine, and then judge.

Good and evil are either *natural* or *moral*.

Natural Good is pleasure, or happiness itself; and what tends to promote that happiness, considered purely in that view.

Moral good is, the *conformity* of the intentions, words, and actions of *free-agents*, to the *law* of God, and to the *reason* and *fitness* of things, in the state and circumstances of those free-agents.

Now *virtue* in one view of it, is *natural* good, as it produces happiness; but this idea of it, is evidently distinct from its *moral* goodness, which consists in its being *chosen* and practised by free-agents, because it is conformable to right reason, and the law of God.

Natural

Natural evil, is *pain*, whether of body or mind. But *moral* evil, or *vice*, is, the *difformity* of the intentions, words, and actions, of *free-agents*, to the *law* of God, and to the *fitness* of things in the state and circumstances of those free-agents.

There is then, a manifest distinction between *natural* and *moral* good. Nor does "the meeting of these two in the same action, make them ever the less distinct. "For the aptitude of an action, to produce happiness, which is its natural goodness; is one thing, and the doing of an action, because it is fit and reasonable that it should be done, (which is the moral goodness of an action, when so done) is manifestly another." Now it is the free choice, and doing of an action, because it is agreeable to the reason and circumstances of things, and because it is commanded of God; in which the precise *morality* of it consists, and by which it gains a peculiar approbation.

The goodness of an action is again distinguished into *material* and *formal*. The material goodness of an action, is its aptitude (considered distinct from the manner in which it is done) to produce *natural* good, or pleasure. The formal goodness of an action is, when the *manner* in which it is done, is lawful and right: or when an action is done, in that manner, in which the law of God, and the reason and circumstances of things require it to be done; which being added to an action *materially* good, renders it complete in its kind, or such as the *law* requires it to be. But this distinction is much the same, with the *natural* and *moral* goodness of actions.

From

From this definition of good and evil, virtue and vice, it appears, that their whole *moral* nature, depends on the *choice* of free-agents; but that their *natural* influence, is wholly independent on any ſuch choice.

On the contrary, *Auguſtus Toplady* aſſerts, that the choice of free-agents, "Has nothing to do, off "or on, with the *morality* of actions*." But that virtue and vice, good and evil, are equally moral, proceed they from what they may.

But if *moral* goodneſs does not conſiſt in the free choice of that which is *naturally* good, or commanded of God, there will be no diſtinction left between natural and moral goodneſs. 'Tis only the *choice* of a free-agent, that can diſtinguiſh the one from the other. For if good, and evil, virtue, and vice, remain the ſame, with reſpect to man, whether they are freely choſen or not, then the *moral* diſtinction is loſt, and they are reduced to the ſtate of *natural* good only: and if there be no diſtinction between *natural* and *moral* goodneſs in themſelves, nor in their cauſe, there can be no diſtinction in their *rewardableneſs*, or being *praiſeworthy*; conſequently the inſtance adduced by *John Weſley*, to illuſtrate his point, is full to the purpoſe; and man is no more *rewardable*, for the good that he does without the freedom of choice, than the Sun; nor puniſhable for the evil, any more than the earth when it ſwallows up a city, or the ſea, when it drowns a multitude of men.

Again, if the moral goodneſs of an action does not conſiſt in the *choice* of a free-agent; then, an action *materially*

* Page 43.

materially good, must be deemed good, upon the *whole*, let the *form* of it be what it may. For if the choice of a free-agent, alters nothing in the quality of an action, then the intention or disposition of mind, can make no alteration in the *good* or *evil* of it.

But this is contrary to the common sense and reason of mankind, and to the scriptures of truth. "For it is not the *matter* of an action, though *good*, "that can sanctify it, the *form* of it being evil. "For an action *materially good*, is yet *evil*, as often "as the *form* of it is so." The giving *alms* is an action materially good; but to give *alms* for *ostentation's* sake, or to serve some *wicked design*, is manifestly *evil*. To relieve a man, with a family in great distress, is an action materially good: but to give this relief with a *view* that he may give his evidence to take away an innocent man's life, is a most horrible wickedness. I therefore conclude, that the *choice* and *intention* of him who does an action, very much alters the nature of that action with respect to *himself*, and makes it either good or evil.

But farther, if *moral* good, or evil, does not consist in the choice of a free-agent; then, where the actions themselves are both alike, *materially* good, or *materially* evil, there is nothing to distinguish one man from another in the degrees of criminality, in doing them. According to *Augustus Toplady*, therefore; he who kills a man, without intention, is as guilty and deserving of *equal* punishment, as, he that does it by the most crafty and vile means; and he that confesses Christ from lucrative views, is equally good, as he who confesses him from a principle

ciple of conſcience. " For (ſays a celebrated * Ca-
" ſuiſt,) when the material actions are the ſame,
" there is nothing can diſtinguiſh the man that does
" them, but ſomething within, which *can do* this,
" or *let it alone*."

This doctrine is contrary to the common ſenſe of mankind. For what man is there, who would not make a difference between Nero, who, through a malicious hatred to all mankind, ſets fire to the city, and deſtroys thouſands of men; and a careleſs ſervant, who may occaſion the ſame miſchief? Or who would ſay that a general, who has his army cut off in the valiant defence of his country; is *equally* guilty with him, who for a bribe, delivers his men up to death, and his country to ruin? Or, who, in the name of aſtoniſhment! can believe, that a phyſician, whoſe preſcription, contrary to his expectation, cauſes the death of his patient; is equally deſerving of puniſhment, with a ruffian, who breaks into an houſe and murders a man in his bed? If this be the caſe, heaven have mercy on the gentlemen of the faculty, for I know not what will become of them! Yet theſe and a thouſand other palpable abſurdities muſt infallibly take place, if choice and intention have nothing to do with the *morality* of actions.

This doctrine is as contrary to ſcripture, as it is to reaſon, and the common ſenſe of mankind. For God, by appointing the cities of refuge, manifeſtly puts a difference, between one who kills a man *unwillingly*, and him who kills a man with *deſign*.

 And

* Taylor's Duct. Dubit. Lib. iv. p. 755.

And our bleſſed Lord teacheth us, that the very choice and intention of the mind, to do an action, is criminal; in harmony with which, the apoſtle tells us, that he who *hateth* his brother is a murderer. Now, whether we are to follow Jeſus Chriſt and the Apoſtles, or *Auguſtus Toplady*; whether we muſt lay aſide our ſenſe and reaſon, to believe this hot-headed, blundering Caſuiſt, I leave all the world to judge.

Object. 2. "We are told, ſays this writer*, that "on the hypotheſis of NECESSITY, man is neither "*rewardable* nor *puniſhable*; neither *praiſe*- nor "*blame*-worthy."

To this he anſwers; "No objection can be "more unphiloſophical than this, becauſe it quite "loſes ſight of the very point in debate, viz. of "*neceſſity* itſelf." — But how does he prove this? "Why, The will of God has eſtabliſhed a natural "(i. e. neceſſary) *connection* between virtue and hap-"pineſs, and vice and miſery."——It ſeems then, our author has been contending all along for a neceſſary "*connection* between virtue and happineſs, "vice and miſery." But, who ever denied *this neceſſity?* Or what, in the name of wonder, has it to do with the neceſſity of human actions? Perhaps he will ſay, "But this proves, that man is *rewardable*." True: But it does not prove, that man is *rewardable*, on the *ſuppoſition* that all his actions proceed from an abſolute neceſſity; any more than it proves that we are all angels. It ſhould have been proved, that, *on the hypotheſis of neceſſity*, man is *rewardable*

* Page 44.

rewardable. Our author takes the hypothesis for granted, and then gravely goes about to prove, that a good man is actually rewarded, and that a wicked man is actually punished. Now what is this, but a bare-faced begging the question?—a taking for granted what he ought to have proved, and then arguing from it, as if it had been demonstrated? The objection therefore, as yet, stands in its full strength; nor do I think this writer of sufficient ability to throw a dart, that can even make it totter.

"If we shut out the doctrine of necessity, says "he*, which asserts the inseparable connection of "moral evil with intellectual infelicity, men will "want one of the most rational motives which can "possibly induce them to hate vice"—But who does shut out the inseparable connection between vice and misery? Or, how in the world can any one suppose, that *this connection* has any thing to do, either with the necessity, or freedom, of human actions?

We are told in a note, page 47, and 48, that "If the finally predominant motive do not necessarily determine the will; and if the will so "biassed, do not necessarily influence the conduct; "actions and volitions would be uncaused effects."

Now this argument proceeds thus. If God has endued man with a principle of *self-motion*, and that *self-motive principle*, ever produce motion, then that motion will be produced without any principle or cause whatever. But how ridiculous this argument is, let any one judge. For a *self-motive power* is

 doubtless

* Page 47.

doubtleſs, a cauſe ſufficient to produce motion, or otherwiſe it would not be ſelf-motive. Beſide, this argument will conclude againſt free-agency in God, as well as in creatures. If this reaſoning therefore could prove any thing, it would prove abundantly too much.

Our author ſays§, *Non eſt intelligentis cauſæ, ſine Fine ſibi propoſito agere.* By which I ſuppoſe he means to inſinuate, that on the hypotheſis of free-agency, man muſt act without propoſing any *end* to himſelf in acting. But this is a wide miſtake. For the true definition of free-agency is, *a ſelf-motive power eſſentially united with intelligence.* And man can no more loſe his power of perception and underſtanding, than his power of ſelf-motion, both the one and the other (in all probability) being eſſential to the very nature of an human ſpirit. So that the ſelf-motive power in man, can never be exerted, but in *conjunction* with ſome perception of the mind; and conſequently man never acts *without propoſing ſome end, and having ſome view* in acting. But reaſon and experience unite to tell us, that he is not *neceſſarily* determined to act, this way or that, by motives and views; but that he *freely determines himſelf* to act, this way or that, by the motives and views that appear to the mind.

That motives and views are not the *phyſical* efficient cauſe of action, ſeems plain from this; that, if they operate as *phyſical* cauſes they muſt be *phyſical* beings; that is, they muſt have a *real exiſtence* in nature. But they are, without doubt, no more than

Perceptions

§ Page 48. Note.

Perceptions of the mind, and consequently cannot operate by a *physical* efficiency.

What is here said, will likewise fully confute our author's notion of *chance*, which he would gladly graft on the doctrine of free-agency. For *chance*, (as I have said before) stands as much opposed to *design* as it does to necessity. And as man always acts with some *view* and *design*, there cannot therefore, on the supposition of *free-agency*, be any such thing as *chance* in human affairs. All the hard things then, which this writer has said on the head of *chance*, must be looked upon as the ravings of a man, transported by passion, beyond the bounds of reason; and ought to be treated with that contempt they justly deserve.

" Cousin-german to the second, is Mr. *Wesley's* " third objection, says our author; namely, that " if universal necessity determine all the thoughts " and actions of man, there can be no judgment to " come."—And I am inclined to think, it will be found to stand in the same relation to the second, in strength, as it does in affinity: if so, the two cousins may sit calm and serene, beyond the reach of a dart, and smile at the feeble rage, and angry snarls of every petty opponent. But let us impartially examine, and then judge.

" The objector, says he, forgets one main cir- " cumstance of no small importance to the argu- " ment; viz. that the *Judgment-day* itself, is no " less *necessary* than any intermediate event can be."' —Now here we are to observe that *John Wesley* did not say, nor mean to say, that a Judgment-day was

uncertain, holding that to be abſolutely *neceſſary* and *certain*, from the *poſitive* appointment of God. For the force of his objection was not levelled againſt the *certainty* of a Judgment-day, but againſt the *abſolute neceſſity* of all human actions. And as he had before proved, that if all human actions are abſoſolutely neceſſary, they are neither rewardable, nor puniſhable; the inference was natural and eaſy, that if man be neither rewardable nor puniſhable for his actions, there can be no day of judgment; becauſe the buſineſs of that day will be, to reward men according to their works. The neceſſity, therefore, of human actions, and a Judgment-day, are incompatible; the one *neceſſarily* deſtroys the other. Conſequently, as a Judgment-day is *infallibly certain*, there is the ſame *infallible certainty*, that there can be no abſolute neceſſity laid on human actions. But our author, inſtead of proving, as he ought to have done, that the abſolute neceſſity of human actions, and a future judgment, are *compatible*; only amuſes his readers with the certain futurition of a Judgment-day, which no one denies: and hereby leaves the objection in its full ſtrength, which infallibly overthrows his whole hypotheſis.

Let us admit *Auguſtus Toplady*, as judge in this important matter. It is not often that I would chooſe to follow his deciſions; but as I have no objection to the man, ſo I have none to his opinions, when they are founded on truth. And as he happens once to have met with her, we will do him the honour, and give him the ſatisfaction, of abiding by

by his determination in the present argument. "Thus, I affirm, says he‡, the day of Judgment "to be *necessary*: to-wit, because God has abso- "lutely *appointed* it." But in order that this appointment might consist with justice, "It is also "*necessary*, that there should be good and evil ac- "tions, *on which* the sentence of the Judge should "turn. We must, I think, admit this, or at one "stroke *deny the certain futurition* of a Judgment-day."—

Very well said, *Augustus!* I perfectly agree, that good and evil actions are essentially necessary to the certain futurition of a Judgment-day. But upon the scheme of necessity, there can be no actions at all, neither good nor bad. For whatever Being is incapable of motion, except by the physical impulse of some extrinsic force, is most certainly incapable of action. For this motion is not any thing that this Being performs, but only a bare suffering the force or influence of some other Being. But suffering and acting are essentially *different* from each other; consequently that which *only* suffers, does not act. But suppose, we, in vulgar speech, call them actions, yet if they be totally independent on man, as being *any sort* of cause of them, they can neither be good nor bad to *him*, with respect to praise or blame. For whatever thing, man can have no influence upon, neither by way of cause, nor of modification when caused, 'tis most certain he can be no ways accountable for. On this scheme of necessity then, there can be no human-

‡ Page 50.

human actions at all; or, if they be called actions, yet they can neither be good nor bad, with respect to the praise or blame of him who is said to do them. Consequently there can be no day of Judgment; i. e. the necessity of human actions and a day of Judgment are incompatible, and which ever we suppose to exist, it necessarily destroys the other.

For that which thus destroys good and bad actions, destroys a Judgment-day, *Augustus Toplady* being judge.

But 'tis *infallibly certain*, there will be a Judgment-day;

'Tis therefore *infallibly certain*, there can be no absolute necessity laid on human actions; *Augustus Toplady* himself being judge.

Our author and I then, are quite agreed in this grand point; and in this good harmony and by mutual consent let us leave the two cousin-germans, as yet unhurt, and perfectly out of danger, and proceed a little farther.

But I perceive this good understanding between us is not very likely to be of long continuance. My author seems unsteady and changeable. He would now persuade us, that, not necessity, but free-agency is incompatible with a Judgment-day. Let us examine his cogent proofs.

"He alone, says he, can be a *self-determining* "agent, who is *quite independent* on any other agent, "or agency whatever."

I have elsewhere shewed the futility of this argument. But as it here comes in my way again, I would ask, how *any being* can be called *independent*, when

when it is acknowledged, that *every* being receives its existence and power from God?——The human soul was created a *self-motive*, or self-determining, intelligent being, by the supreme first cause of all things; and it is preserved every moment, in existence, with all its powers, by the same almighty conserving cause. How childish then it is to ask, whether such a being, *by the exercise* of the powers freely given it, will not become *independent* and *self-existent?* And let me ask this writer (if the question be not too hard) how he came to imagine, that a Being, capable of self-motion, must be self-existent? And let him tell me if he can, what connection there is, between the cause of motion, and the cause of the existence of the Being moved?—He must know, if he knows any thing of philosophy, that it is no contradiction to suppose a Being to exist, without motion; from which it appears, that the idea of existence may be wholly detached from the idea of motion; they are therefore not *convertible* ideas, so neither are the ideas of self-motion and self-existence. I therefore conclude, that man may be a *self-motive*, *self-determining* agent, without being *independent* and *self-existent*.

All the flourish then, this writer makes with the words Independence and Self-existence, and the low epithets of *knave* and *fool*, so irreligiously bestowed on Paul and Felix, are nothing but the vagaries of an heated imagination; or the wild ravings of a man, *qui est vix animi compos*.

Our author seems not to have been wholly come to himself, when he wrote the Note, in Page 55, where

where he tells us, that, "As predeſtination is the "point itſelf, from which the *ſtrait line* of neceſſity "is drawn; ſo it is alſo the point, into which the "line PROGRESSIVELY but infallibly REVERTS."

— What contradiction and nonſenſe is here! A ſtrait line—*progreſſively* reverting into the point from which it was drawn! A ſtrait line PROGRESSIVELY REVERTING, is I confeſs, ſomething very curious; and quite a new Phænomenon, which I believe all our mathematicians have hitherto been wholly unacquainted with. According to this writer, then, a Being may go forward and backward, at the very ſame time, and in the ſame reſpect.—Is it any wonder that an author, when he imagines he can bring ſuch contradictions as theſe, into perfect conſiſtency and harmony, ſhould aſſert a ſcheme of *abſolute* neceſſity, and give it the name of PHILOSOPHICAL and CHRISTIAN? I believe however, it is the firſt time that any one ever heard that going *forward in a ſtrait line*, will infallibly bring a man BACK *to the place* from which he ſet out! We muſt therefore give our author the honour of this new theory, though I would not adviſe him to put it in practice.—

The illuſtration of his point, muſt run thus,

As a ſtrait line, the farther it is extended from a given point, will be at the *greater diſtance* from it; ſo, if it be *infinitely* extended, it will infallibly *revert* into it! Who can withhold their aſſent from the grand doctrine of neceſſity, when ſupported by ſuch invincible, mathematical demonſtrations! But notwithſtanding this gentleman's great proficiency in

in mathematical knowledge, I will not pretend to ſay, how our mathematicians would addreſs him, were he to tell them, that a ſtrait line, if infinitely extended, would infallibly revert into the point from which it was drawn. It is moſt likely, however, that they would deem him a very improper man, to be truſted abroad without a guide: for he who cannot diſcern a *right*, from a *curved* line; nor a winding path from a ſtrait one, would be very incapable of finding his way home.

It is true, ſuch ſeaſons of debility and diſorder of mind, call for pity, which a good man will never deny, as he cannot help but feel for the misfortunes of his fellow-creatures, *Mentem mortalia tangunt*; but then every body muſt grant, that 'tis little leſs than a *delirium*, for one in ſuch a ſtate, to attempt to write on metaphyſical ſubjects.

How our author, thus equipped for an argument, will manage his attack, on what he calls the fourth objection, we ſhall now proceed to examine.

4th "*Objection.* That the ſcriptures cannot be of divine original if the doctrine of neceſſity be true."

Now the ſtrength of this objection depends on the ſtrength of the preceding objections; and as it is founded on them, it muſt ſtand or fall with them. For, if on the ſcheme of neceſſity, there can be no *moral* virtue or vice; if there can be nothing in man rewardable or puniſhable, then it is undeniable, that there can be no day of judgment; and if on this hypotheſis, there can be no day of judgment; it is clear the ſcripture cannot be of divine original: becauſe it frequently and ſolemnly aſſerts, the certainty

tainty of a judgment-day, and a ſtate of rewards and puniſhments after this life. This objection then, neither affirms nor denies any thing, about the ſcripture-prædeſtination, which our author goes about to eſtabliſh. It has no connection at all with it. It only aſſerts that as the ſcriptures mention the certain futurition of a judgment-day; and as a judgment-day, and the neceſſity of human actions are abſolutely incompatible; ſo, if there be ſuch a neceſſity, the ſcriptures muſt be falſe and not of divine original: but if the ſcriptures are true, in aſſerting the certainty of a judgment-day, then there can be no ſuch neceſſity of human actions.

Our author does not ſeem to have underſtood the nature of this objection, but in anſwer to it, gives us a large catalogue of texts, to prove the doctrine of Neceſſity from the ſcripture: in which, if he ſucceed, the preſent objection is eſtabliſhed, beyond the poſſibility of a doubt, and the divine authority of the ſcriptures effectually overturned. For, if they aſſert two things, ſo eſſentially oppoſite and contradictory to each other, as the abſolute neceſſity of human actions, and a day of judgment, have been proved to be, they muſt of courſe be falſe. I hope therefore, for the credit of that ſacred book, and for the honour of *Auguſtus Toplady*'s profeſſion, that he has miſcarried in his attempt; and that the ſcriptures may yet be true, notwithſtanding his endeavours ſo to interpret them, as effectually to deſtroy their credibility. And I am much miſtaken, if we ſhall not find upon examination, that he might quite as well have proved the eternal exiſtence of the world, as the abſolute neceſſity of human actions, from moſt of the texts which he has quoted.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Scripture Texts examined; in which it appears that the Bible gives no countenance to the doctrine of Necessity.*

OUR Author has already made references to several passages of scripture, wherein he thinks the doctrine of necessity is invincibly asserted. The reader, I believe, when he has carefully examined what has been said, will think otherwise. And I make no doubt, but a very little attention to the absurdity and contradiction of the supposition, will

 fully

* I always mean by Necessity (except otherwise explained) the absolute necessity of all human actions, i. e. that man is under an absolute necessity of acting just as he does, in every action of his life; and that it is not, nor ever was, in his own power to alter the least part of his conduct. My Author has no fixed meaning to the word *necessity*. He sometimes means one thing by it, and sometimes another. One while it shall mean the necessary existence of God; another while the necessary connection between virtue and happiness, vice and misery: in another place, the necessity of a Judgment-day, because appointed by the Deity. It has a variety of significations in the course of his book. It is hard to tell, why this writer should thus shift about, and hide himself behind the shadow of a word; except it be to deceive the unwary reader, by an empty sound, and to keep up the appearance of an argument, when in reality he is at the greatest distance from it.

fully convince him, that it is impoſſible they ſhould aſſert any ſuch thing. For, on the ſcheme of neceſſity, no creature can move, but by the *phyſical* impulſe of ſome exterior force; it can determine *itſelf* to no action whatever, but in every thing that is done by it, it muſt be *moved* and *determined* to it, by the *phyſical* influence of ſome other Being; and the creature, left to itſelf, would be quite motionleſs and incapable of action. Now if a ſelf-motive, or active power be thus excluded from every creature, it will follow, that God is the only Agent in the univerſe; that he alone *moves* and *determines* every creature, to every action it performs. Whatever therefore, is done among men, God muſt be the doer of it; they are no more than the *paſſive* inſtruments, by which he performs *whatever pleaſes* him in the world. Conſequently, on this ſuppoſition, God muſt approve of every thing that is done in the world, becauſe he muſt be well pleaſed with every effect of the *all-determining* agency of his own almighty power. And every man, on this ſcheme, is juſt where providence has placed him, and is doing juſt what God wills him to do. On the contrary, the ſcripture aſſerts, that God is not well-pleaſed with every thing that is done in the world, and that he does not approve of all the actions of men. If then, the ſcripture aſſerts predeſtination or neceſſity (i. e. that every man does, *only* what God *determines* and *wills* him to do) and yet that he is not well-pleaſed with every thing in the world; it aſſerts two things abſolutely contradictory to each other. For it would be to ſay, that there is ſomething in the world

which

which God *approves*, and does *not approve*, at the very ſame time, and in the ſame reſpect; than which there cannot be a more direct and abſolute contradiction. And I am as certain that a doctrine cannot be true, which involves in itſelf ſuch a contradiction, as I am, that 'tis impoſſible for me to *ſee*, or *feel* a thing, and *not to ſee* or *feel* it, at the very ſame time, and in the ſame reſpect. Every attempt therefore to prove predeſtination or neceſſity, from an arbitrary interpretation of ſcripture, is juſt as abſurd, as to attempt to prove, that a man can neither ſee, nor hear, nor feel any thing, at the very ſame time that he is fully and uniformly conſcious that he does both ſee, and hear, and feel it.

Notwithſtanding this, our author drives on, Jehu like, through thick and thin, in the utmoſt hurry and confuſion; and in ſpite of reaſon and truth, will preſs the ſcripture into his ſervice. Let us ſee if we cannot reſcue this fair, *unwilling* captive out of the ſervice of falſhood and error.—The following paſſages are introduced, as giving full proof of the doctrine of neceſſity, viz.

I with-held thee from ſinning againſt me. Gen. xx. 6.

It was not you that ſent me hither, but God. Gen. xlv. 5, 6, 7, 8.

I will harden his heart, that he ſhall not let the people go. Exod. iv. 21.

It was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they ſhould come againſt Iſrael to battle; that he might deſtroy them utterly. Joſ. xi. 20.

The ſtars in their courſes fought againſt Siſera. Judges v. 20.

The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich, he bringeth low, and raiſeth up. 1 Sam. ii. 7.

Theſe, and many other paſſages of a like kind, this writer quotes as invincible proofs of predeſtination. But may we not juſtly wonder how it ever enter'd into any man's head to imagine, that theſe ſcripture texts aſſert the abſolute neceſſity of all human actions? Or how does it appear, that they have any more connection with the doctrine of neceſſity, than with that of free-agency? 'Tis plain they aſſert neither more nor leſs than this: 1. That there is a Divine Agency of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of men, inclining them to good, and diſſuading them from evil. 2. That there is a Providence, ſuperintending human affairs, bleſſing and puniſhing as infinite wiſdom ſees good.—But this is quite as conſiſtent with free-agency as with neceſſity. Theſe paſſages therefore are foreign to our author's purpoſe.

But there are a great number of quotations yet to come; for our author, as if ſuſpecting he was deficient in weight, was determined to make it up in meaſure. Beſide, it might be hoped, that ſo vaſt a group, choſen by a perſon of ſuch diſtinguiſhing penetration as this writer, might happily convince the reader, by its very appearance, that the doctrine muſt be divine, and ſave him the trouble of an examination; but as I am not one of that ſort of readers. I ſhall take the liberty, at leaſt, to read his quotations over.

* *Behold he taketh away, who can hinder him? who will ſay unto him, what doſt thou? For he is not a man*

* Page 58.

man as I am, that I should answer him, and that we should come together in judgment, Job ix. 12, 32.

† *For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven. To make a weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure. He made a decree for the rain, and a way for the lightening of the thunders.* Job xxviii. 25, 26.

When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only. Job xxxiv. 29.

By the breath of God, frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened. Also by watering he wearieth the thick cloud: He scattereth his bright cloud. He causeth it to come: whether for correction, or for his land, or for mercy. Job xxxviii. 10—13.

Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he; in heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deep places. He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth: He maketh lightenings for the rain. He bringeth the wind out of his treasuries. Ps. cxxxv. 6. 7.

He covereth the heavens with clouds, he prepareth rain for the earth, he maketh grass to grow upon the mountain. He giveth to the beast his food: and to the young ravens when they cry,—&c. &c.

There are many more quotations still left behind, but no more to the purpose than these. And when the reader considers, that they are all adduced as positive and invincible proofs of the absolute necessity of all human actions, I am confident, he will think, with me, that it must be an *uncommon* degree

† Page 62.

of penetration that chose them out for that purpose. But whether it was *uncommon*, for the clearness of the ken, which can clearly discern things, other people can see nothing of: or for the confusion of the sight, which only sees men as trees walking; I must leave to the candid determination of the discerning reader.

I apprehend it will be judged unnecessary to give a particular answer to every text of scripture this writer has quoted. For it seems to me undeniable, that he might quite as well have proved any thing else, as what he pretends to prove by them. For what connection is there between the creation and government of *material nature*, and the nature and powers of an *immortal spirit?* This writer indeed asserts, very positively, that material nature, and the human soul, are precisely under the same laws and mode of government; (i. e. are both governed by an absolute necessity) therefore what he cannot affirm of the one, he denies of the other.

But if they are under the same laws, it will follow, that they have the same nature; for God governs all creatures by laws suited to the nature he has given them. Does this gentleman then believe, that the soul of man is as material as the wind? as the clouds that cover the heaven, or the grass that grows on the mountains? If he does, he ought to have given us notice of it, and openly have professed that he would proceed in his arguments on that supposition; but if he does not, why then does he conclude any thing from the government of the one, concerning the nature and powers of the other?

Again;

Again: If material nature and the human ſoul, are governed by the ſame laws, it will invincibly follow, that the one is as capable of moral good or evil as the other; conſequently the one will be as rewardable as the othor. Our author therefore effectually cuts up by the very roots, all moral good and evil among men, and utterly deſtroys all reaſonable expectation of a Judgment-day, and a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. For if the human ſoul and material nature are preciſely governed by the ſame laws here, the one may be as reaſonably judged and rewarded as the other hereafter.

From our author's manner, I apprehend the reader will be tempted to ſuſpect, that he is ſubject to a diſorder which is called a *Paroxyſmus Inſaniæ*. For the future therefore, when I perceive the fit to be upon him, I ſhall very ſeldom diſturb him, but paſs along quietly without ſpeaking a word, unleſs when I think the caſe is ſomewhat peculiar, and that proper notice ought to be given of it: but as ſoon as any ſigns of ratiocination begin to appear, I ſhall converſe with him, as chearfully and with the ſame good nature, as if nothing at all had happened.

"The apoſtle James, ſays he, § was endued "with grace and ſenſe to be a neceſſitarian," becauſe he has ſaid, "*Ye know not what ſhall be on* "*the morrow.——Ye ought to ſay*, IF THE LORD "WILL, *we ſhall live, and do this or that.*" Now to make the apoſtle plead for neceſſity in theſe words, the expoſition muſt run thus,

"Men

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"Men are not endued with the divine prescience, "to penetrate into futurity with certainty; there-"fore whatever they do, proceeds from absolute "necessity. They are not stronger than the al-"mighty to counteract his will, nor can they exist "independent of that will and power which gave "them existence; consequently they cannot act at "all; they can neither move hand nor foot, but as "they are irresistibly determined to it, by an ab-"solute necessity."—This is the reasoning (if we must give it that name) of *Augustus Toplady!* But I think most readers will acquit the good apostle of such absurdities.

But this writer thinks ‖ the apostle Peter will decide in favour of necessity beyond the possibility of a doubt, for he says, "They who *stumble at the word* "*were* APPOINTED *to disobedience* ‡."

I think myself obliged, however, to clear the apostle of so foul an aspersion. Whatever *Augustus Toplady*'s translation may say,—the apostle never said any thing so *shocking* and *inconsistent*. APPOINTED to DISOBEDIENCE, is no less than a contradiction in terms. For I ask, with astonishment, how that which is *appointed* by the Deity, can be a *disobedience* to the Deity? This is destroying all law and reason whatever. The divine appointment is the law to every creature that exists: and if every man be *necessitated* to act just as he does by the divine appointment, then every man is doing what he was appointed to do; i. e. he is obeying the divine law; and every man, on this supposition, obeys it, in

‖ Page 70. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 8.

in an equal degree. And if *morality*, as this author ſaid above, be nothing more than the relation that a man's conduct bears to a given rule, *independent* of his choice, then every man has an equal degree of *moral goodneſs*. For Neceſſity ſuppoſes every man to act up to the rule of divine appointment in the fulleſt degree, and that he cannot poſſibly deviate from it, or even come ſhort of it in any one point. Now this is ſaying, that man does every thing that God *wills* or *requires* him to do; and ſo he is fully obeying the divine law. Conſequently, ſin and diſobedience are impoſſible fictions: and if ſin and diſobedience cannot exiſt, then the ſcripture is full of falſhood, and Jeſus Chriſt gave up his life, *horribile dictu!* to expiate a mere nothing. Theſe are indeed terrible conſequences, and ought to be abhorred by every chriſtian and reaſonable man. But they are ſuch as invincibly follow, from the doctrine of abſolute neceſſity; and I challenge, in the face of the whole world, either *Auguſtus Toplady*, or any other more able advocate for this ſcheme, to get clear of theſe abſurdities if they can.

I object then to this writer's tranſlation of the apoſtle's words, as being a perverſion of the true ſenſe of the paſſage.——The words ſtand thus, *οἱ προσκοπτουσι τῳ λογῳ, ἀπειθοῦντες, εἰς ὃ καὶ ἐτέθησαν*. Now here I obſerve, 1. That the verb *τιθημι* ſignifies *pono*, *colloco*, and in the 6th verſe of this chapter is tranſlated, *lay*. 2. That *εἰς ὃ ἐτέθησαν*, is a phraſe exactly ſimilar to, *εἰς ὃν παρεδοθητε*, Rom. vi. 17, tranſlated, *which was delivered to you*. 3. That *εἰς ὅ*, may be put for *εἰς ὃν*, (i. e. *λογον*) an

an irregularity of gender being admitted, when relation is had, rather to the *thing* meant, than the word expres'd; an example of which, we have, John xvi. 13, 14. These things attended to, which are clear and manifest, without the least strain or force, the translation will run thus; *They stumble at the word, (being disobedient) which* (word) *was put*, i. e. offered *to them*. Would not one wonder how any man could translate these words, "They who "*stumble at the word, were appointed to disobedience.*" There is not the least shadow of *appointed to* DISOBEDIENCE in the text. And suppose we translate ἐτέθησαν, *they were appointed*, which sense it sometimes bears, yet this will not alter the case. For the word *disobedience* is not to be found at all in the original, but is entirely added by *Augustus Toplady*, tho' *inserted* and even *mentioned* as spoken by the apostle. How this gentleman can justify this, either to God, to his conscience, or to the world, I confess I cannot tell. 'Tis however, a clear evidence, that *little dependence* can be had on his quotations from scripture.

"‡ *There are certain men crept in unawares, who* "*were before of old ordained to this condemnation.* If "so, says our author, were not the sin and condem-"nation of these men inevitable."—

I answer; No. For the text says not a word about their sin being either ordained or necessary; nor any thing that can bear such an interpretation, without the greatest force put upon the words. The apostle only says, that these wicked men were, πάλαι προγεγραμμένοι εἰς τοῦτο κρῖμα, *before described* or

‡ Jude iv,

or written of *some time ago* (i. e. by prophetic men) *with respect to this condemnation*, which would come upon them for their sins. So that this text gives not the least countenance to the doctrine of necessity, or the impossible chimera of God's *appointing* men to *disobedience*.

Our author proceeds,|| and pronounces our Lord an absolute necessitarian, with that air of confidence, which is but too often a concomitant of ignorance, and strongly characteristic of a little mind. But let us give him a fair and candid hearing; and see what evidence he can produce.

The following passages are quoted from our Lord's sermon on the mount, as infallible proofs of the *absolute necessity* of all human actions.

—*One jot, or one tittle, shall in no wise pass from the law, 'till all be fulfilled.*

—*Thou canst not make one hair white or black.*

And does not the reader perceive, as clear as day, that if he cannot make one hair white or black, it will undeniably follow, that he cannot move his hands at all, 'till forced by absolute necessity?

—*Your father who is in heaven, maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.* See the comment! "Surely man "can neither promote nor hinder, the rising of "the sun, nor the falling of the rain."—It therefore undeniably follows, that if man can neither hinder the sun from rising, nor the rain from falling, he can neither move hand nor foot, 'till impelled by some *necessitating* force.

It

|| Page 71.

It is to be hoped that ſome of the *ſenſible* men in the nation, who have adopted the ſcheme of neceſſity, will decree our author ſome particular honours for the ſtrong and *ſenſible* arguments he has adduced in favour of their ſcheme: for I think it muſt be acknowledged by every one, that they are quite out of the *common* way of reaſoning, and ſo refined that a man of common underſtanding can ſcarce forbear laughing at them. And he certainly merits ſome reward on another account, as his method of demonſtration is the moſt convenient of any I ever ſaw, to prove whatever a man pleaſes.

He gives us a few other quotations from our Lord's ſermon on the Mount, from all which, I will venture to aſſert, he might quite as well have proved the Pythagorean tranſmigration of ſouls, as the doctrine of neceſſity and predeſtination. Let us give a look however at his laſt quotation. *The rain deſcended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that houſe; but it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.* "That is, ſays our author, "in plain Engliſh, it could not fall. It ſtood *neceſ-* "*ſarily*"—But I would obſerve, that in the plain *Greek*, there is nothing that ſignifies it *could not* fall: or that it ſtood *neceſſarily*. Our Lord's plain Greek, and *Auguſtus Toplady*'s plain Engliſh, being nearly as different in ſenſe, as they are in language.

† In the other parts of the goſpels, ſays this "writer, we find Chriſt reaſoning and acting on "the higheſt principles of abſolute neceſſity. *I* "*will, be thou clean*, ſaid he to the poor leper. *And* "*immediately*

† Page 73.

" *immediately his leprosy was cleansed**. The effect " *necessarily* followed. The leper *could not but* be " healed."—

Now this argument proceeds, on the supposition that there is no more of active power in the soul of man, than in his body; and that matter and spirit, are precisely under the *same mode* of government. And all that this writer says, about miracles proving the necessity of human actions, proceeds upon the same false and dangerous hypothesis; viz. that matter and spirit are exactly under the same mode of government. For, if he does not suppose this first, as a certain principle; how can he conclude, that because matter is entirely passive in all its modifications, therefore man has in himself no *self-motive* power, is wholly *passive* in all his actions, and every moment modified, according to the will and appointment of God.

But if Matter and Mind be under the same mode of government, i. e. both governed by an *absolute* Necessity, as *passive* beings; it will follow, that their nature is the same; since God governs all creatures, by laws suited to the nature he has given them. And of this consequence the more ingenious advocates for Necessity are very sensible, and even admit it for true. And in this sense, a certain learned writer, in a late publication, is indeed, very *consistent* with himself, tho' I think very *inconsistent* with reason and truth.

Our Author, like all other fatalists, makes a great stir about the divine prescience. He lays hold of this weapon, and deals blows about him, like a man

 despairing

* Mat. viii. 3.

despairing of life; without prudence or mercy. But it is to very little purpose; for notwithstanding his eagerness to kill and destroy, he only

——*verberat ictibus auras*,

—*beats the empty air*, and spends his strength without doing any real execution. I confess, he has more appearance of argument on this subject, than in any other part of his book; but the attentive intelligent reader, will easily see through the fallacy.—— He argues thus,

"Scripture prophecy demonstrates, 1. The absolute fore-knowledge of the three Divine Persons. 2. The unalterable necessity of things foreknown." * For "Fore-knowledge, undarkened by ignorance, and superior to all possibility of *mistake*; is a link which draws invincible Necessity after it, whether the scripture doctrine of predestination be taken into the account or no."

Our author then argues for the *necessity* of the event, from the *certainty* of fore-knowledge. And as this subject is not without its difficulties, let us give it a cautious and deliberate examination.

To infer the *necessity* of the event, from the *certainty* of fore-knowledge, seems to me quite beside the point. For if there are no other arguments, *a priori*, to prove the necessity of human actions, 'tis certain they can never be proved to be necessary, *a posteriori*, from fore-knowledge. For knowledge, whether *fore* or *after*, alters not the nature of things, but simply views them as they are in themselves. Let any one carefully consider this, and he will soon be

* Page 79.

be convinced, that things are the ſame in themſelves, whether we ſuppoſe them known or not known. Knowledge has nothing at all to do, either with the Neceſſity, or Freedom, the certainty, or uncertainty, of Actions and Events, but only to view them as they are in themſelves, without having any influence upon them. For a thing is the ſame after it is known, as it was before; and the ſame before, as it is after. If the actions of men then, are proved to be *free*, the bare certainty of the divine Fore-knowledge, cannot poſſibly deſtroy that Freedom; becauſe Fore-knowledge can have no influence on the things fore-known.——It follows then, that no argument can be drawn from the divine Fore-knowledge againſt human Liberty, and conſequently the divine Preſcience is beſide the preſent queſtion.

Again. It ſeems to me againſt all the rules of juſt reaſoning, and little leſs than a contradiction, to infer, the Neceſſity of human actions, from the Certainty of divine Preſcience. 'Tis evident, from what has already been ſaid, that Knowledge alters not the Nature of the things known, but only views them as they are in themſelves; and it has been proved above, that human actions are *free*, conſequently they muſt be *foreknown* AS FREE, i. e. as they are in their own nature. But it would be a contradiction to ſay, that an action foreknown *as free*, is therefore *neceſſary*. For, to know an action as *neceſſary*, which is in its own nature *contingent*, would not be Knowledge but Miſtake.

But it will be aſked, How God can foreknow actions, which depend on the Will of Free-agents?

or, How that which is *contingent*, can be *certainly* foreknown?

I anſwer. God can know every thing according to its nature. And I can as well explain, how God God can fore-know the actions of Free-agents, as I can explain any other act of Divine Knowledge; for *every* act of Divine Knowledge, is incomprehenſible to us. And it is juſt as improper to aſk, how God *can* foreknow the actions of Free-agents, as it is to aſk, how God *could* create the world. For the Divine *Power* is no more explicable than the Divine Knowledge. But no one would look upon it as ſound reaſoning, to conclude againſt the exiſtence of the world, becauſe we cannot explain how God could create it: neither is it good reaſoning, to conclude againſt Human Liberty, becauſe we cannot conceive how God can *foreknow* the actions of Free-agents. 'Tis therefore certain, that all arguments againſt Human Liberty muſt be drawn from other premiſes than the inexplicable Fore-knowledge of God.

"But ſtill," perhaps it will be ſaid, "If Knowledge be founded on the nature of things, as they are in themſelves; then the *certain* Foreknowledge of an Event, will imply the *Neceſſity* of that Event, in the nature of things;—and, 'tis not contended, that things are *neceſſary* becauſe *foreknown*; but that they are *foreknown*, becauſe they are in themſelves *neceſſary*."——But this is a full acknowledgment that Fore-knowledge can be no certain proof of *Neceſſity*; but that things muſt be proved to be *neceſſary*, by arguments *antecedent* to any that can be drawn from Fore-knowledge.

But

But however, in anſwer to this, I ſay, that the certain Fore-knowledge of an Event, does by no means imply the *phyſical Neceſſity* of that Event; for *Certainty* and *Neceſſity*, are not neceſſarily involved in each other. I have undeniably ſhewed above, that an infallible Certainty, may well ſtand, independent of a *phyſical* Neceſſity.——Thus I am infallibly certain, that God will not again deſtroy the world *by water*; but 'tis manifeſt there is no *phyſical* impoſſibility of this coming to paſs. If then, Man may have an infallible Certainty of an Event which is not *phyſically* neceſſary: how much more may the glorious and omniſcient God, know the Actions of men, tho' there be no abſolute Neceſſity laid upon them?—For we may eaſily conceive, that the Almighty, Omniſcient God, who perfectly knows the nature and powers of every creature? who underſtands their mutual influence and dependence on each other, who ſees at one comprehenſive view, every ſituation, with every concomitant circumſtance, of every creature that ever did or will exiſt; I ſay, we may eaſily conceive, that ſuch a Being may infallibly foreknow how a Free-agent, who acts with *deſign*, and determines itſelf by apparent motives, will act, in every ſituation and circumſtance of its exiſtence.

Let me only obſerve farther, that as Free-agency is proveable, and has been proved, by a variety of irrefragable arguments; ſo, if the infallible Fore-knowledge of future events did really prove *Neceſſity*, the argument would conclude, not againſt Free-agency, but againſt Fore-knowledge. "For if a free action be in its own nature impoſſible to be

fore-known; it is no more a diminution of the Divine Omniſcience, not to know what is impoſſible to be known, than of his *Omnipotence* not to work *contradictions*, which are in truth no objects of Power."

But the caſe, however, is far otherwiſe. It will evidently appear, to any impartial enquirer, from what has been ſaid, that the Divine Preſcience and Human Liberty are quite conſiſtent. The *heathen* indeed would ſay, that "*Apollo* himſelf could not foretell things *future*, unleſs they were ſuch, whoſe *cauſes* were ſo contained in the nature of things, that it was *neceſſary* they ſhould be." But I cannot agree with *Auguſtus Toplady*, that the knowledge of the ever bleſſed and eternal JEHOVAH, is circumſcribed within the narrow limits of this imaginary fortune-telling god of the heathens. "For I can eaſily conſent that *Apollo* ſhould be excluded from this ſuper-eminent perfection of knowing and predicting future *contingencies*; but I muſt needs aſſert it, as the diſtinguiſhing prerogative of Him, who has created, and who upholds ALL THINGS by the WORD of his POWER.

From theſe obſervations it appears, 1. That all the arguments which our author has drawn,§ from the certainty of fore-knowledge in proof of *Neceſſity*, are totally wide of the point; becauſe, Things muſt be found to be *Neceſſary*, by arguments, antecedent to any that can be drawn, from fore-knowledge. But (2) were we to admit this mode of argument (which indeed cannot be admitted) yet the certain fore-knowledge of an action, would not prove the

§ From Page 74,—to 80.

the Neceſſity of it; Fore-knowledge and Free-agency, being perfectly compatible.

The moſt favourable light in which, I think any impartial perſon can conſider our Author, for ſixteen pages forward, is that of a *dreamer*, and not of a *reaſoner*; ſcarce any veſtiges of reaſon and argument, being to be found in them. Take the following quotations, as evidences of the candour of this ſentence.

The following paſſages are offered as inconteſtable proofs that man has in himſelf no *principle* of ſelf-motion, that he can neither ſpeak nor act, but by the impulſe of ſome other being.

"*O Father, thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed them unto babes.* Mat. xi. 25.

"*Fleſh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father who is in Heaven.* Mat. xiii. 18.

"*Go thou to the ſea, and caſt an hook, and take the fiſh that firſt cometh: and when thou haſt opened his mouth, thou ſhalt find a piece of money.* Mat. xvii. 27."

And becauſe the diſciples did find a piece of money in a fiſh's mouth, according to Chriſt's word, therefore, ſays *Auguſtus Toplady*, it is infallibly certain, that man can neither do good nor evil, but as he is *neceſſarily* impelled to it.

"*To ſit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, except unto them for whom it is prepared of my Father.* Mat. xx. 23.

"*Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And preſently the Fig-tree withered away.* Mat. xxi. 19.

Who-

"*Whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.* Mat. xxi. 44.

"*That which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.* John iii. 6.

"*If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him.* John iv. 11."

Now I verily believe, the reader would have been so stupidly dull, as to have read these passages an hundred times over, without once suspecting them of asserting, Predestination and Necessity; had not this writer's uncommon sagacity informed him of it. But he goes on:

"*Lazarus come forth.* Chap. xi. 43."

On this passage our author gravely asks, "whether, "it was in *Lazarus*'s power *not* to awake and rise "up?"—Now if we finish this argument, it will proceed thus. 'If then *Lazarus* when he was 'dead, had not a greater power over his body and 'spirit, than Christ had, it undeniably follows, 'that when he was alive, he had no *active* power 'at all; for when a man is dead, he has a much 'greater power over himself, both body and spirit, 'than when he was alive. If therefore, you do 'not see a man when he is dead, *walk* and *carry* 'burdens, speak, and transact business; nay if his 'power when dead, does not rise superior to the 'power of the Deity himself, it will follow, that 'when he was alive he had no power at all, either 'to speak or move but by absolute Necessity.' *Risum teneatis amici!*

I presume the reader, by this time, thinks I have very well supported my charge; and I dare say he fully agrees with me, that if this wild talking be not a dream, it must be something worse.

This gentleman, however, seems very confident that he has been quite awake all the time, (tho' few people besides himself I believe will think so,) for he boldly asks, ‡ "Now what can a fair and "capable examinant think, of the Arminian self-"determination doctrine?" —I believe no reasonable man will think it in the least disturbed by what has yet been said against it.—But "It grafts such "a monster as *Contingency* on the religion of JESUS "CHRIST."—What hideous figure, a wild and lawless fancy, may have represented to the mind of our author, under the name of *Contingency*, I will not pretend to say; but sound reason will tell us, that Contingency is the beautiful daughter of the *Omnipotent self-determining* Will of the Supreme Being; and is in perfect harmony with all the Divine Attributes, and with Creation and Providence. For what is Contingency, but, *such a state of being as might not have been? or, as might have been otherwise than it is?* And must not every man allow, that all created natures are in this state of Contingency? i. e. they might not have been created, &c. For whoever denies this, must assert that God was under a Necessity of creating them; and hereby he sets up the Heathen fiction of *Fate*, above God himself; the absurdity of which is manifest. And in this sense likewise, it appears that the religion of Jesus Christ

‡ Page 97.

Chriſt, is itſelf *contingent*, i. e. it might not have been. For had there been no creatures, there would doubtleſs have been no religion; and even after the creation, had man ſtood in his *firſt* ſtate of innocence, there could have been no ſacrifice for ſin. I know it is anſwered, "that man's fall itſelf was *neceſſary*." But if it was *neceſſary*, it muſt be by the appointment of the Deity; and if ſo, it could not be a ſin, becauſe God, being Holy, can appoint nothing but what is holy and good. To ſay, "No, 'twas *only permitted*," is to ſay nothing at all. For on the ſcheme of Neceſſity, *Permiſſion* is an empty, unmeaning ſound, without any idea at all; the very ſuppoſition of it, being abſolutely inconſiſtent with Neceſſity. Nay, it effectually deſtroys it; as I ſhall fully ſhew in its proper place.

From hence I think, it muſt clearly appear, to unbiaſſed reaſon, that contingency is no ſuch frightful monſter as our author's miſtaken fancy would perſuade him, but neceſſarily§ ariſes from the free-agency

§ My Author will doubtleſs catch at the word *neceſſarily*, and inſtantly conclude, that what is *neceſſary*, cannot be *contingent*.—This ridiculous confounding all kinds of Neceſſity together, and being guided by the mere ſound of a word, reminds me of a little boy, juſt beginning to ſpeak, who having no ſiſter, and hearing himſelf and his brother frequently called Boys, and good or bad boys, according to their behaviour, very innocently imagined, that every living creature was *a boy* as well as himſelf. Hence the *Cow* was *a good boy*, and the *Hog*, a *bad boy*, juſt as they happened to pleaſe his fancy. This gentleman ſeems in a ſimilar ſituation with reſpect to *Neceſſity*. Guided by the bare *ſound*, he childiſhly imagines, whenever he meets with the word *Neceſſity*, that it is full to the point in debate, tho' it may be as different from it, as an Hog or a Cow is from a Boy. But men of ſober reaſon will either laugh at, or pity ſuch looſe imaginations.

agency of God himſelf, is confiſtent with all the divine attributes, and harmonizes with creation and providence.

But he complains, " that our modern Arminians, " not content with trampling on God's *decrees*, are " now verging towards a flat *denial*, even of God's " *abſolute* and *unlimited knowledge*."

It muſt be obſerved, that I am not engaged in the defence of a party, nor any opinion as the opinion of a party; but only of what I believe to be the truth. However, I do not know any Arminian who denies the *decrees* of God; they indeed deny the decrees, which ingenious, but whimſical men have invented, and then attributed to God; and not without juſt reaſon, ſuch decrees being utterly inconſiſtent with any juſt notions of a deity. As to the *abſolute*, *unlimited* knowledge of God, I leave any man to decide, whether *Auguſtus Toplady*, or the Arminians deny it. The Arminians aſſert, that God can know all things according to their nature:—the actions of men, are in their nature *contingent*:—God therefore has a perfect knowledge of them in their contingent nature. *Auguſtus Toplady*, on the contrary aſſerts that on this ſuppoſition, " God does not " *fore*-know, but *after*-know:—that his *fore-knowledge* " cannot be *fore-knowledge*, but random conjecture " and ſurmiſe"—‡ This is deſtroying the diſtinguiſhing prerogative of the *true* God, with a witneſs! and circumſcribing his *unlimited* knowledge within the narrow bounds of a fictitious Heathen Deity. May we not then juſtly wonder, (to uſe our author's own

‡ Page 78.

own phrase) at the reversed modesty of this gentleman, who is for shifting off from himself to other folks, the charge of robbing God of an attribute, by which he stands gloriously distinguished from false Gods ?

Our author's chapter of Arguments for *Necessity*, deduced from the *balance* of human life and death, is wholly beside the point. For the question is not, whether man has a power to prevent his entrance into life; nor whether God has a power to take him out of life, whenever he pleases; neither the one nor the other having the least connection with the doctrine of free-agency.

But the true question is, whether man has a power to destroy his own life without the *positive* appointment of God? But this point is left as much undecided as it was before, not a word being spoken that has any relation to it. I shall therefore pass over this chapter, and come directly to the last chapter of our author's essay, which we shall candidly and thoroughly examine.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Neceſſity *an horrible*, Free-agency *a comfortable, doctrine.*—Neceſſity *and* Sin, *incompatible.—Conciſe view of* Manichæiſm—*The nature of* Evil *enquired into.—The amazing abſurdity of our Author's mode of reaſoning.—Concluſion.*

"THE pretended *gloomineſs* of Neceſſity, (ſays this writer†) is urged with moſt ap-
" pearance of plauſibility, againſt that which re-
" lates to the decree of *reprobation.* Let me for
" a moment weigh the pretended horror of this
" principle.—Is it gloomy then, to believe that the
" far greater part of the human race are made for
" *endleſs happineſs?*"—But I aſk, is this the decree of *Reprobation?* If not, this queſtion is nothing to the purpoſe. Well, but he will ſpeak to the point preſently, and quite diſperſe the gloom.——† "With
" reſpect to the few *reprobates*, we *may*, and we
" *ought*, to reſign the diſpoſal of them implicitly to
" the Will of that only King who can do no
" wrong: inſtead of ſummoning the Almighty to
" take his tryal at the tribunal of our ſpeculations."

But I anſwer: This is not weighing the horror of this decree at all; it is wrapping it up in thick darkneſs, and then giving out, that it ſtands on holy ground, and muſt not be approached to. But

 this

† Page 120. Note.

this is all a fallacy, and can tend only to deceive. For I deny that God ever made any ſuch decree, or that we have the leaſt *veſtige* of any ſuch thing, either in ſcripture or reaſon. To examine into this *pretended* decree therefore, is not ſummoning the Almighty to the tribunal of our ſpeculation, but bringing the *inventions* of men, to the teſt of reaſon and truth.

The gentleman, to whom theſe obſervations were made in a private letter, would doubtleſs be ſurprized to ſee a man write with a profeſſed deſign to elucidate a dark ſubject, and ſay *not one word* about it; but only, that, "We ought implicitly to reſign it to Him who can do no wrong." If this be ſufficient to clear a difficult ſubject, or to eſtabliſh a doubtful point of doctrine, there can be nothing ſo abſurd, that may not eaſily be proved the ſame way.

The gloomineſs of Neceſſity then, is juſt as great as it was before, not *one* Ray of Light being tranſmitted into it. And a gloomy proſpect indeed it muſt afford, to any One, who can conſider himſelf as ſent into the world by *Neceſſity*, and endued with ſuch a nature as *neceſſarily* ſubjects him to everlaſting miſery and pain; to a ſtate of darkneſs, horror, and deſpair, for ever and ever.—But the dreary ſhade, where nothing can be ſeen, but wild deſpair, and nothing heard, but piteous lamentation and woe, with the horrid thought, that an Almighty Being made creatures for this very end: is too frightful to enter; and as I ſtep back into the light of truth, I feel comfort in the reflection, that it was

but

but an imagination; and that the thing is, in itſelf, as really impoſſible, as that there ſhould not be a God.

On the contrary, the doctrine of Free-agency and univerſal Redemption, opens a large, extenſive proſpect, where ſcenes of pleaſure and delight preſent themſelves to the chriſtian and philoſophic eye. Here God appears a God of love, from whom nothing but Good can proceed. The rays of divine Light and Truth, iſſue forth on all ſides, as from the Center, and irradiate the whole circle of Human Beings. Here the Divine Attributes harmonize, and Creation, Redemption and Providence, all unite, to lead every man to a ſtate of endleſs bliſs.

How happy muſt a pious man feel himſelf, under the divine influence of ſo pleaſing a proſpect! He views himſelf under the care and protection of an almighty Being, who *can* will nothing but good to him and all mankind. He feels himſelf under the gracious guidance of the Spirit of Truth, which diſpoſes his mind to good, and opens to his view, a Providence ſuper-intending all the affairs of men, and appointing to every human action that *effect*, which infinite Wiſdom ſees beſt. Thus he knows, that nothing can happen, but in that manner, and meaſure, which unerring Wiſdom appoints, or permits. And tho' this lays him under no *neceſſity* of doing either good or evil, yet hereby he is raiſed to a capacity of chooſing good and ſerving God, in righteouſneſs and holineſs, and finds himſelf ſurrounded with infinite incentives to every chriſtian virtue.—This is indeed but a very faint ſketch of the

beauties of this doctrine: but faint as it is, it seems sufficient to discover its divine Origin, and its deserved preferableness to the gloomy prospect of *a direful Necessitation to* endless misery.

But this writer supposes, again and again, that the doctrine of free-agency, destroys a providence, and introduces *chance* and *confusion* into all nature. "If (says he‡) "the Will of man be free, with a liberty "*ad utrumlibet*; such of his actions which are not "yet wrought, must be both radically and eventu-"ally *uncertain:* as depending on an *uncertain cause:* "—It is therefore a *chance* whether they shall ever "be performed or no."

I answer; this argument proceeds entirely on a mistake. It supposes, that if a Being be not *necessarily* determined in its conduct, by some superior force, it can act by no *rule*, nor have any *uniformity* or *regularity* in its actions. It would follow by this mode of reasoning, that God, who is acknowledged to be a *self-determining* agent, and consequently has a liberty *ad utrumlibet*, can act by no *rule*, nor have any *regularity* in his actions, and that whatever God doos, is done *without reason*, and by mere *chance*. But this, it is little less than blasphemy to assert.

Again, it supposes that if motives do not necessarily determine a man, to one *certain* thing, and take away a liberty *ad utrumlibet*, he cannot act by motives at all; and then there can be no certainty, *how* a man will determine himself to act, in any case whatsoever.

But

‡ Page 122.

But this is all a mistake. For every *active, intelligent* Being, is *necessarily* incompassed with motives to action, and it can no more be without motives, than without its intelligence. But these motives have not a *physical* influence on the mind; they do not determine the soul, as a greater body impinging on a less, determines it in its motion. The thing is impossible: for motives are not *physical* beings, and therefore cannot operate as such. Man then, in the midst of surrounding motives to various actions, is left with a liberty *ad utrumlibet*, i. e. to chuse either the one or the other. Then you say, "It is a chance which action he will perform." I answer; not at all. There is a *medium* between a physical influence, and no influence; between a *necessary* determination, to one certain action amongst many, and being alike indifferent to all. And this middle state, between a physical influence, and no influence, affords, what is called among men, a moral certainty of the event, which in the divine mind is always infallible.

Again: Man is so *constituted* in his present *compound* state of soul and body, that things have a twofold *influence* upon him, very different from each other; the one, from objects adapted to his rational nature, the other, from those which strike on his outward senses. Thus when he views the fitness of things; the harmony and propriety of actions, with the nature of that Being which performs them; or the order and wisdom of Providence, assigning to every thing its proper *effect* and *place*; he feels a grateful sensation excited in his mind, with love to

the Being that does these things. But the pleasure a rational nature feels, on the view of these actions, is very different from that which arises from the gratification of our outward senses. Here then, when things so different in their nature and influence, are presented to the view of the mind, the soul has a liberty *ad utrumlibet*; and I think, I may say with truth, that while it attends to the rational view of things, it will determine itself to act, by the dictates of reason; but when it attends to the *sensual* gratifications, it will determine itself to act, with sensual views. But still man acts with design. There is therefore no *chance* in human actions; for whatever is done with *design*, and directed by *certain* views, can no more be done by chance, than if it was done by *necessity*.

Our author proceeds next,* to give us an account of the origin of Necessity. And in order that we may rightly understand him, let us again repeat what we mean by the word *Necessity* in the present controversy. The present controversy then, is not whether God exists by *Necessity*, nor whether there be a *necessary* connection between virtue and happiness, vice and misery, &c. &c. But whether man is under an *absolute Necessity* of acting in all cases just as he does, and whether it is never in *his own power* to alter the *least circumstance* of his conduct. The origin of this doctrine we are now to examine.

John Wesley had said; that "man is not self-"determined, has been an exceeding antient opi-"nion. It was unquestionably the sentiment of *Adam*,

* Page 126.

" *Adam*, ſoon after he had eaten of the forbidden
" fruit. He imputes what he had done not to
" himſelf but another; *the woman whom thou gaveſt*
" *me*. It was alſo the ſentiment of *Eve*: *the ſer-*
" *pent beguiled me, and I did eat*. It is true, I did
" eat, but the cauſe of my eating, the ſpring of my
" action, was in another."

I confeſs, I am in ſome doubt, whether this be a concluſive argument, that Adam and Eve, believed the doctrine of Neceſſity. I rather think, that this doctrine is of a leſs antient date, and took its riſe from perſons at ſome diſtance from our firſt parents. Our Author however, is by no means ſatisfied with *this antiquity* of his favourite *hypotheſis*, and undertakes to prove the Neceſſity of human actions, before any human Being had exiſtence. Thus he tells us, " With the author's leave (of the above paragraph) he will carry the doctrine of neceſſity ſomewhat higher up."—" God himſelf is a *neceſſary*
" Being. He exiſted, and *could not but* exiſt, with-
" out beginning. He exiſts, and *cannot but* exiſt,
" without end. Neceſſity therefore is, coeval with,
" and inſeparable from, Deity; i. e. it is truly and
" properly eternal. I would term Neceſſity in
" this view of it, *Neceſſitas prima*."—

This argument, properly expreſſed, ſtands thus.—
" God himſelf is a neceſſary Being. He exiſted,
" and could not but exiſt, without beginning. He
" exiſts, and cannot but exiſt, without end."——
" The " Neceſſity" of *human actions*, " therefore,
" is coeval with, and inſeparable from, Deity; i. e.
" it

‡ Page 128.

"it is truly and properly eternal. I would term "Necessity in this view of it, NECESSITAS PRIMA" "*actionum humanarum*."

The reader will perceive that by inserting these two or three words, which are in Italics, to connect the paragraph with the subject of this controversy; the absurdity of our author's reasoning, stares him directly in the face. And I dare say, he wonders, if such nonsense was ever published to the world before.

He goes on. "With regard to Adam, he was "sufficiently instructed in the doctrine of Necessity, "during the state of innocence"—But I must here beg leave to ask our author, who told him so? For as I find nothing of it in holy writ, I must have some better authority for it, than his bare word. Well, here is proof. "He, (Adam) could not "but know that he existed necessarily, and that "every circumstance of his situation, was necessa-"rily determined by a superior hand."—

But will it therefore follow, that he must likewise act necessarily? Are existence, situation, and action, the very same things? What school-boy is there, that could not discover the error of such a conclusion? yet it naturally follows, from the foregoing premises, if we suppose them to have any connection with the present controversy.

He proceeds. "Eve likewise could not but "know, that she was necessarily made, necessarily "placed in Eden, and necessarily consigned to "Adam. I conclude therefore, that the first man "and his wife, were Necessitarians, (i. e. believed "they acted from necessity) antecedently to their "fall."

Now

Now I think our author, might as well have concluded, that they were horſes or cows antecedently to their Fall, but became *men* by committing ſin. This concluſion I am certain, would as juſtly have followed from the premiſes as the other. For, being *neceſſarily* made, placed in Eden, and conſigned to Adam, differ from the actions of Eve, *toto cœlo*; which the others do not. ||

If no created Being has in itſelf a power of Self-motion; if it moves in every action, by Neceſſity, i. e. by the impulſe of ſome other Being, it naturally follows, that God is the only Agent in the univerſe: that Creatures are only Patients, or the mere *paſſive* inſtruments of the will and pleaſure of the Deity. Now it is manifeſt, that this ſcheme of *Neceſſity* makes God the Author of the ſin and fall of our firſt parents; and indeed of every action in the world.—

But this writer anſwers, § " By no means in the " world.—When we ſay, that the fall of man came " neceſſarily to paſs; 'tis only ſaying, that Satan " is neither too ſtrong, nor too wiſe for God: " and that Satan would not have proved too ſtrong " or too wiſe for Eve herſelf, had it been the Will " of God, *poſuiſſe obicem*, i. e. to have hindered " Satan from ſucceeding. Now, if 'twas not the " Divine Will to bar the enemy from ſucceeding: " and if it was really foreknown, that without ſuch " bar, the Enemy would ſucceed; and if God " could,

|| That is, Horſes and Cows, do not differ from Men by a *generical* difference: they being all comprehended under the genus of Living Creatures.

§ Page 128.

"could, without injuſtice, actually forbear, at the "very critical time, to put an effectual bar in the "way, though he certainly had power to do it: "the inference is invincible, that Adam and Eve "fell *neceſſarily*."

Let us deliberately weigh this invincible Argument.——It proceeds thus:

God *fore-knew* that the Enemy would ſucceed in his temptation of Eve, unleſs he put a bar in the way:—But he had decreed, that he would forbear to put a bar in the way:—Therefore Eve *neceſſarily* fell. Now this ſuppoſes, that what is certainly fore-known, muſt be *phyſically* neceſſary. But this has been proved above, to be an entire miſtake.—It will not therefore follow, that Eve fell *neceſſarily*, becauſe God *certainly* foreknew it.

But again. This argument ſuppoſes a *ſelf-motive*, or *ſelf*-determining power in the creature. For what meaning has the word *forbear*? Can it mean any thing elſe than this, *viz.* that God would not hinder the enemy, from exerciſing all his power, ſubtelty, and art, in that temptation? But this ſuppoſes that the Enemy had a power, which he could exerciſe at his own pleaſure: which indeed God could have taken from him in a moment, but he had decreed that he would not. But if our author allows one intelligent creature to have *a ſelf*-determining power, he has no reaſon to deny it to another. Conſequently, Eve might be *ſelf-determined* as well as the enemy, and therefore could not fall *neceſſarily*.

But our author has a very momentous hint to give us; and as *momentous hints* ſhould not be paſſed,

paſſed over too ſlightly, we will be the more attentive to this.

* " The entrance of Original Sin was one of " thoſe eſſential links, on which the Meſſiah's in- " carnation was ſuſpended. So that if Adam's fall " was not *neceſſary*, it would follow, that the whole " Chriſtian Religion, from firſt to laſt, is a piece " of mere *chance-medley*, and conſequently, cannot " be of divine Inſtitution."

Now this is directly putting the Concluſion before the Premiſes. It is making the incarnation and ſufferings of the Meſſiah, a neceſſary event, antecedent to the very ſuppoſition of Man's Fall, and ſuppoſing the Fall of Man to be, in conſequence of it, as *a neceſſary* means of its accompliſhment. But if the Fall of Man was only decreed as a neceſſary means to bring about the Incarnation of the Son of God, an unbeliever would have much reaſon to conclude, that an event could not, in itſelf, be a bleſſing to the world, the accompliſhment of which had brought unſpeakable miſery on all mankind. And if the death of Chriſt was an event, decreed and neceſſary, previous to the ſuppoſition of the Fall of Man; then the Recovery of Man from that Fall could not be the End of Chriſt's coming, for the End muſt be previous to the Means: and conſequently Man, if this be true, has nothing to expect from what Chriſt did and ſuffered, &c.— But I ſtop: The very ſuppoſition being ſhocking and abominable, and attended with moſt horrible and deſtructive conſequences. This momentous hint

* Page 130.

hint, is indeed *momentous* enough; for if it be admitted as true, it will effectually tear up all revealed religion by the very roots!

"But if the christian religion be contingent, it "will follow, that it is a piece of mere *chance-* "*medley*: and consequently cannot be of divine "institution."——The absurdity of this reasoning will fully appear, if we draw it out at full length, —It proceeds thus:

If it was *possible* for God to have created human Beings in such a state, that they could not have fallen; and if he could have manifested his glory, by any other means, than by the incarnation and death of his Son: it will then follow, that the *actual* manifestation of the Divine Glory, by Jesus Christ, and the whole of the christian religion, is a piece of mere *chance-medley*, and consequently cannot be of divine Institution.

Now, if this argument be unreasonable and absurd, it is undeniable that our author's Reasoning is in the same state of absurdity.

Again; if a thing that is *contingent*, cannot be of God, then the world cannot be of God; for it is doubtless contingent, and every creature in it; i. e. they *might not* have been created. For who dare say, that God was under a Necessity of creating the world? He who is so bold, must either suppose that there is some other Being, superior to God, that obliged him to act, (which is a contradiction:) or else he must say, that the world was created by the Necessity of the Divine Nature. But if this was the case, then it would follow, that God created as many worlds, and as many creatures in them,

as

as he *could* create; and that every creature was made as perfect as God could make it. For whatever Being acts from the Neceſſity of its nature, acts to the utmoſt of its power, and that *always*: as the ſun ſhines to the utmoſt of its power, and always ſhines. So that it would follow, if God created the world by the neceſſity of his nature, that he is continually creating new worlds, and will be doing ſo to all eternity. Theſe and many other abſurdities, unavoidably follow, on the ſuppoſition that the world, and the creatures in it are not *contingent*: but notwithſtanding their *contingency*, they are nevertheleſs the works of God.

There is one thing that has very much puzzled all the fataliſts, and which, not one of them has ever been able to get over. It is, how to account for the *origin* of evil, without making God, the author of ſin. Indeed upon their ſcheme it is impoſſible. The doctrine of Neceſſity, directly makes God the author of all the evil in the world. It takes away all the praiſe and blame of every perſon in it; Men, being on this hypotheſis, no more than the *paſſive* inſtruments by which God worketh whatſoever pleaſeth him; and differ nothing from the inſtruments and machines of an artiſt, ſave only, that they have a power of conſciouſneſs added to them, by which they perceive, and reflect on the things that are done by their inſtrumentality; and falſely imagine that they themſelves, are the real agents that perform them.

In order to get over this difficulty of their ſcheme, ſin has been treated of by moſt fataliſts, (and indeed by too many who do not eſpouſe that doctrine)

as a mere *privation*, or an *absence* of something, which ought to be present, and therefore can want no *positive* cause. But the notion which makes sin properly speaking, a mere nothing, in order to justify God as not causing it, (for Nothing wants no cause) will doubtless justify the sinner as much; who can no more be the cause of nothing, than God, and consequently, be no more culpable than Him. And indeed I do not see, how there can be any *positive* punishment for a mere *negation*; much less can I conceive, that the death of Christ was an atonement for *nothing*; nor even for that which has more of a negative than a positive nature in it. It would be well for these gentlemen to consider this, as a matter of no small importance.

Our author indeed, writes with more modesty on this subject than it is usual for him to do. It would have given me very sensible pleasure, had he done so, in the other parts of his book: it would likewise have been a credit to himself, and an advantage to his subject. He thinks, however, that sin has more of a *negative* than a *positive* nature in it. Let us hear what he has offered on the subject.

"Evil, whether physical or moral,‖ does not, "upon a narrow inspection, appear to have so *much* "of *positivity* in it, as it is probable some antients "supposed."

"A man breaks his leg: i. e. the continuity or "cohæsion of parts natural to that limb, *ceases* to be "integral. This is followed by the evil of pain. "And what is pain? the *absence* or *privation* of "ease antecedently enjoyed. A man's house is "burned

‖ Page 135.

" burned down. The consequence is, a loss or pri-
" vation of property. He does not possess so much
" as he did before."—

I cannot help thinking however, that both *physical* and *moral evil*, have as much of *positivity* in them, as *physical* and *moral good*. An action indeed, is not *res*, but *modus rei*; it has no *physical* existence, but is only a *mode* of some Being. But a *bad* action, with respect to the *matter* of it, is certainly as *positive* a thing, as a good one, for good and bad actions are not *privately*, but *contrarily* opposed to each other, and admit of as *contrary* an opposition, as any two things can do; and consequently are both *positive*, for *contraries* are always so.

And if we examine a *sinful* action, with respect to the *form* of it, i. e. its special dependence on the will of a free-agent; we shall find it altogether as positive as a good action; for it requires as *positive* an *act* of the will to constitute the form of a bad action, as that of a good one; and sin is as much the *actual* choice of a sinner, as goodness is the choice of a saint.

The sins that have the greatest appearance of a mere Privation, are sins of Omission. But even these, on a close examination, will be found to be *positive*. For their sinfulness, strictly speaking, does not consist in the *not doing*, or the *not willing* to do, what is commanded, but in the WILLING *not* to do it: but the *willing* not to do a thing, is as *positive* as the *willing* to do it; as being not *privately*, but *contrarily* opposed to it:—I therefore conclude, that *Sin* is positive as well as *Goodness*.

The case is the same with respect to physical *Evil*, in the instances above quoted from our author; for Pain is not *privately*, but *contrarily* opposed to Ease and Happiness; and that Action which is effective of Pain, is contrarily opposed to that, which is effective of Happiness, and consequently, the one is as *positive* as the other.

Nor do I think the apostle's definition of Sin, contradicts this account of it. Πας ὁ ποιων την ἁμαρτιαν, και την ανομιαν ποιει· και ἡ ΑΜΑΡΤΙΑ εστιν ἡ ΑΝΟΜΙΑ. 1 John, iii. 4. Which our author thus translates. *

Every man, who committeth sin, doth also commit illegality: for sin is ILLEGALITY. On which he gives us this Comment.——" Whence I conclude in the " first place: that Sin strictly considered, has more " of Negation in it than of Posivity; else it could " not have been properly defineable by a *merely* " *negative* term. For *illegality* imports no more than " a *non-commensuration* to the Law as a rule, or " measure of length and breadth.—But *secondly*, I " infer, that unless Sin had something of Posivity " in it, the Illegality of it could not be said to be " commissible, " Every man who COMMITTETH " *illegality*."——And yet after all, I do not clearly " discern how that can be, without the assistance " of Dr. Watts's distinction, between actions them- " selves, and the *sinfulness* of them."

I confess I can by no means agree with this translation, and the comment taken together. " Sin is " *Illegality*."—" But *Illegality* (says this writer) " imports no more than a *non-commensuration* to the " Law,

* Page 137.

"Law, as a meaſure of length and breadth."—That is, *Illegality* is not any thing that is *abſolutely without*, or *contrary to*, the Law, but only a not coming up to the full *extent* and *proportion* of it. So that he who commits *illegality*, acts by the *right* rule, only his *action* does not reach to the *full extent* of that rule. But certainly this is not the true ſenſe of the word *Illegality:* at leaſt, I am confident it does not reach the ſenſe of the greek word, *ανομία*, For *ανομος*, is *exlex*, i. e. one who is and acts *without law*; and *ανομία*, is *lawleſſneſs*; ‡ i. e. that which hath no *relation* to the Law whatſoever, but ſtands in *oppoſition* to it. But that which bears *no relation* to a given rule, cannot properly be called, a *coming ſhort* of it; and that which is done by a *wrong* rule, will be juſt as poſitive as that which is done by a *right* one: and what is done *without Law*, as poſitive as that which is done under the *direction* of it. I therefore conclude, that the apoſtle's definition does not imply, that Sin has more of Negation than of Poſivity in it; and conſequently Sin may be *poſitive* as well as Goodneſs.

It will not follow, that becauſe Sin is defined by a *merely negative* term, therefore it muſt have more of Negation than of Poſivity in it: For the words, *immortal*, *deathleſs*, *indemnify*, &c. are merely negative terms, but yet they undeniably imply, *poſitive ideas*. That Argument therefore can prove nothing.

I do not ſee how the diſtinction between Actions themſelves and the *ſinfulneſs* of them, can at all help our author out, in making ſin a *negation*. When

 we

‡ *Leigh's* Critica Sacra.

we consider an Action itself, *merely* as an Action, there can be no *evil* in it. For otherwise all our actions whatsoever would be evil. But when we consider an action as tending to give *pleasure* or *pain* to any person: it is then denominated *materially* good, or *materially* evil. And when such an action is *chosen* by a Free-agent; it is called *morally* good, or *morally* evil: which coincides with the common distinction of actions into their matter and form. Now I have shewed above, that whether we consider Sin, as to the *matter* or the *form* of it, we shall find it *positive* as well as Goodness.

"But (says this author ‡) in what light soever "we consider these Modes of Being and of Action, "called natural and moral evil; whether we view "them as positive qualities, or as negative, or as "mixed, still the question returns; Whether the "Great First Cause, who is infinitely and merely "Good, can be either efficiently or deficiently the "Author of them?"

"In my opinion, the single word *Permission* "solves the whole difficulty, as far as it can be "solved in the present beclouded state of Human "Reason."

But I answer. The doctrine of Necessity utterly excludes the very *possibility* of any proper notion of *Permission*, from having any place with respect to any creature in the universe. To *permit*, is no more than, *non impedire*, not to hinder. The language of permission then, is, that if God did not *hinder* Eve, she would *determine herself* to eat of the forbidden Fruit, by the occasion of satan's temptation.

But

‡ Page 139.

But the doctrine of Necessity says, that we cannot move, nor do any action whatsoever, but as we are determined to it by the power of God; so that if *Augustus Toplady* believe Necessity, he must deny Permission, or if he hold Permission he must deny Necessity.

" Arminianism, (says this writer§) which repre-
" presents moral and natural evil, as entering and
" as reigning, in DEFIANCE and CONTRARIETY
" to, the *will* and *wish* and *endeavours* of the Divine
" Being, co-incides so patly with the Manichæan
" dream of the two *almighty conflicting principles*,
" who reign in spight of each other, and catch as
" catch can; that I really wonder at the reserved
" modesty of these Free-willers, who are for shift-
" ing off the charge of Manichæism, from them-
" selves, to other folks."

But can this gentleman be *so amazingly* ignorant of the doctrines of *Arminianism*, as really to believe, that they represent evil, " as entering and reign-
" ing, in *defiance* and *contrariety* to, the *will* and
" *endeavours* of the Divine Being;" in the *manner* he here sets it forth? If he do not understand Arminianism, why then does he enter into a controversy about what he does not understand? If he do understand it, why does he designedly give a false representation of it? Can this be consistent either with truth or honesty? However, lest it should be *ignorance* and not *design*, (which I would rather hope to be the case) I will inform him what the real doctrine of *Arminianism* is, with respect to the *entrance* and *prevalence* of evil in the world.‡

§ Page 141. Armin-

‡ I do not here mean to inform him what Arminius or any

Arminianiſm then, or the doctrine of Free-agency, aſſerts, that God governs all creatures by laws, *founded* on, and *commenſurate* to, the natures he has given them. He has created the *human* ſoul, an *intelligent*, *ſelf-motive*, *or ſelf-determining Principle*. His government of man, is therefore ſuited to, and in perfect conſiſtence with, this *intelligent ſelf-determining* Power. And God has neither *will*, nor *wiſh*, nor does he *endeavour* to govern men by any other *law*. Not that God wants power to govern men otherwiſe, but he *wills* not, to uſe any other *mode* of government, than what can ſtand in perfect *conſiſtence* with thoſe powers which he has planted in their nature.

Now this doctrine is conſiſtent with the divine Permiſſion of evil. It ſuppoſes that *Adam* and *Eve*, had a power to *determine themſelves* to that act, of eating the forbidden fruit, provided God ſhould permit them to do it. And ſo far as we can judge of the *fitneſs* of the divine conduct, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that God was *not bound* to alter his mode of government, nor to deſtroy the powers of a Free-agent, in order to preclude evil from his works: He therefore permitted evil to enter, and he permits it to reign. Not for want of power to hinder it, nor of knowledge to foreſee all the conſequences of it, nor for want of goodneſs to do that which was beſt. But becauſe it was his *Divine Will* and *Pleaſure*, to permit man ſo to *determine himſelf*; and thus to allow the entrance and continuance of evil, ſo far, and ſo long, as it ſhall ſeem good to his infinite

other man has written on this ſubject, but only what account the doctrine of Free-agency can conſiſtently give of this matter.

infinite Wisdom. Arminianism then, is so far from representing evil, as entering and reigning in *defiance* of the *will* and *wish* and *endeavours* of the Divine Being, as this writer sets forth, that it resolves both the *entrance* and *prevalence* of it, into the *permissive will* of this most *Wise* and *Holy* Being.

If it be said; "but do you not represent God as *striving* and *endeavouring* to reclaim men from sin, but he *cannot* prevail." &c.—

I answer. To represent God as *striving* and *endeavouring* to reclaim men from sin, and to *preserve* them in a state of holiness; is no more than his governing men, by that *mode* of government which his wisdom has chosen, in congruity with the nature and powers he has given them. That this *does not* prevail, is manifest to every one; but it does not imply that God *cannot* prevail, for he can destroy both sin, and every sinner out of the world in a moment: but it is not his *will* to adopt any other mode of government.

It seems to be an high crime in this gentleman's estimation, to represent God as *willing* or *endeavouring* (i. e. as governing men, by laws suited to their *moral* powers, and according to the *tenor* of the covenant of grace) to reclaim sinners. But if there be one sinner whom God does not thus endeavour, or *will*, (or has not endeavoured) to convert; He will doubtless not punish him for continuing in his sins. For we cannot suppose that God will be displeased at a man for not doing what he neither *wills* nor *wishes* him to do. And if this be the case, why does *Augustus Toplady*, harangue the people on the subject of repenting and breaking off their sins,

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by turning to God, that they may obtain mercy; if God neither wills nor wishes men to do any such thing? Perhaps it will be said, this is his *business*; and whether there be any thing of truth in these matters or no, yet a man must get a maintenance. I answer, this indeed is another affair; but quite beside my present business to enquire into.

But still our author will have it, that Arminianism, and Manichæism coincide with each other; and tells us, § that were he disposed to make the most of his arguments, he might add, and very fairly too, "That the old *Manichæism* was a *gentle* "impiety, and a *slender* absurdity; when contrasted with the modern Arminian improvements on "that system. For which is worse? To assert the existence of *two* independent Beings, and no more, "or to assert the existence of about *one hundred and* "*fifty millions* of independent Beings, all living at "one time"—So that, "confining ourselves to "our own world, it will follow, that *Arminian* "Manichæism, exceeds the paltry *oriental* duality, "at the immense rate of 150,000,000 to Two! at "the very lowest computation."

The reader will perceive, that our author here falls into one of his usual fits, in which, by the influence of an heated imagination, he boldly mounts his aërial car, the work of a wild fancy, and furiously driving on

——————*obstantis findit nebulas*

'till becoming giddy and confused, he vainly imagines, Phaeton like, that

Sparsa

§ Page 144.

Sparsa quoque in vario passim miracula cœlo,
Vastarumque videt trepidus simulacra ferarum.

Ovid.

His flight however is not of a long continuance. He descends from these aërial regions towards the close of the following page; and I hope with better success than his wild exemplar did, as I presume he has neither done, nor received much harm.

He seems not in very good temper however; for the first work he goes about is to find fault.

" Mr. Wesley, says he‡, seems much displeased " with a brace of gentlemen, whose names he has " not communicated to the public. One of these " we are told delivered his mind to this effect: I " frequently feel tempers, and speak many words, " and do many actions which I do not approve of. " But I cannot avoid it. They result, whether I " will or no, from the vibrations of my brain, to- " gether with the motion of my blood, and the flow " of my animal spirits. But these are not in my " own power. I cannot help them. They are " independent on my choice. Therefore I can- " not apprehend myself to be a sinner." But the gentleman has added, " on this account." (And *Augustus Toplady* should have added it likewise: For, why does he blame another person, even without just cause, for " mangling and altering," when he himself actually falls into the same practice?) -- " Thus " far, says our author, I perfectly agree with the " gentleman unknown. Every one of his premises " is

‡ Page 145.

"is true. But the conclusion limps most miserably." Limps! Where? Against what rule of just reasoning does it offend? Certainly a man is no more blameable for any action, than he is for that which necessarily causes that action, with all its particular circumstances.

A man can therefore, be no more blameable for that action, which necessarily results, with all its particular modes, from the vibrations of his brain, the motion of his blood, and flow of his animal Spirits, than he is for those vibrations, &c. themselves. So that the Judge might as well condemn a man to be hanged, because his pulse beats too quick, or too slow, and because his brain vibrates after a certain manner; as for committing murder.—But if this would be deemed highly unreasonable and absurd; then, 'tis undeniably the same absurdity to suppose, that a man can be deemed a sinner, and be liable to eternal punishment, for those actions which he is thus necessitated to perform.

But this author, "intreats* him to cry mightily "to God, for that supernatural influence of grace, "which alone is able to convince him of his sin-"nership."——

This indeed is very good advice, on the supposition that man is a free-agent; but it is ridiculous, on the supposition of *absolute Necessity*. For why does our author advise him to cry mightily to God? when he firmly believes that he cannot even move his tongue, till God almighty *irresistibly* determines him to do it? On this hypothesis all exhortations and advices to men, ought rather to be turned into prayers to God, that he would determine and modify every

* Page 146.

every creature differently to what they are: ſince every man muſt act juſt as he does, till he is otherwiſe circumſtanced; and the alteration of thoſe circumſtances, depends entirely on the will and pleaſure of God.—Let us give a ſpecimen of that form of prayer which every *Neceſſitarian*, conſiſtently with his principles, ſhould be continually offering up to God.

'O LORD GOD moſt mighty, we know that 'thou haſt all power in heaven and in earth, and 'that every creature is only what thou *makeſt* and '*willeſt* it to be. Thou *alone* putteſt the circum-'ſtances by which every man is *neceſſarily* deter-'mined to every action that he doeth. We are 'told, indeed, that thou art wiſe; but thou alone 'cauſeſt Men to err; that thou art Truth itſelf, but 'yet all the lies and falſhood in the world, happen 'by thine own appointment. We tell men, that 'thou art good; but we know that thou cauſeſt 'them to do all the wickedneſs which they com-'mit.—We therefore humbly beſeech thee, to 'alter thy manner of determining men to ſo many, 'and ſo great acts of wickedneſs. We pray thee to 'act, with more wiſdom, truth, and goodneſs, 'than hitherto thou haſt done. Lord we beſeech 'thee, do not determine this man to commit mur-'der, nor that man to ſwear falſely; but do thou 'determine men to goodneſs, conſiſtently with that 'character we give of thee to the world'

Now if ſuch a prayer as this, would be highly unchriſtian, blaſphemous and abſurd; then the doc-

trine of abſolute Neceſſity, is all theſe united together.

Our author proceeds. " The other gentleman, " according to Mr. *Weſley's* hiſtory of him, believes " the *Omnipotence*, but doubts the *Wiſdom*, and flatly " denies the *Goodneſs* of God."—Thus the Creed " goes on. " All the evil in the world is owing to " God. I can aſcribe it to no other cauſe. I can- " not blame that cur for barking or biting, it is " his nature; and he did not make himſelf. I feel " wrong tempers in myſelf. But that is not my " fault: for I cannot help it. It is my nature. " And I could not *prevent* my having this nature: " neither can I *change* it."

" I will, ſays he, beſtow a few conciſe annota- " tions on this confeſſion of Faith, be it real, or be " it fictitious."

" *All the evil in the world is owing to God.* No- " thing (ſays this writer*) can be more falſe. For, " as the great and good Mr. *Edwards* obſerves, it " would be ſtrange arguing indeed, becauſe men " never commit ſin but only when God leaves them " *to themſelves*, and neceſſarily ſin, when he does " ſo: that therefore their ſin, is *not from them-* " *ſelves*, but from God: and ſo, that God muſt be " a ſinful Being. As ſtrange as it would be, to " argue, becauſe it is always dark when the ſun " is gone, and never dark while the ſun is preſent; " that therefore all darkneſs is from the ſun, and " that his diſk and beams muſt needs be black."

But I anſwer; 1. This remark of *Jonathan Edward's* overturns the doctrine of *Neceſſity*, and proceeds

* Page 147.

ceeds upon a quite *different* ſuppoſition. For what does he mean when he ſays, God leaves men *to themſelves?* Can he mean either more or leſs than this? viz. that God leaves men with a liberty to chuſe, either *this* action or *that*; ſo that by virtue of this choice, with a liberty *ad utrumlibet*, they are properly accountable for their actions.

But this is contrary to the doctrine of Neceſſity, which deſtroys the *poſſibility* of God leaving men to themſelves. For if men are left *to themſelves*, i. e. free from, the phyſical influence of all other Beings, they could not, according to this hypotheſis, act at all: They would be as motionleſs as a ſtatue, and neither move hand nor foot, nor do either good or evil. Conſequently men cannot be left to themſelves upon any other ſuppoſition, than that they are Free-agents.

2. The illuſtration does not by any means come up to the point in queſtion. For what is Darkneſs, but the abſence of Light? It is not a poſitive Being; it muſt therefore ſtrictly ſpeaking, be a mere nothing. But nothing needs no poſitive cauſe to proceed from; and if Men when left to themſelves are *Nothing*, how can they commit Sin?*

"*I feel wrong tempers in myſelf: but that is not my fault.*"

 "*I feel*

* It is in my mind, if the friends to truth and virtue ſhould give encouragement to the undertaking, to give *Jonathan Edwards*'s Book, here referr'd to, a fair and candid examination: if health and leiſure ſhould be granted me. But, ſhould ſuch a work be undertaken, it will be executed, with that candour, and reſpect, which is unqueſtionably due, to the character of a man of ſuch diſtinguiſhed abilities, and ſo deſervedly eſteemed for his piety.

"Certainly, ſays our author*, the fault's *in* yourſelf, and conſequently the fault is your's"—

But I anſwer: That if the having an irregular motion *in* a man, makes it his own, ſo as to conſtitute him guilty, then we are puniſhable for every irregular motion of our blood or animal ſpirits, which has any evil influence on our health or conſtitution. So that, according to this argument, he who has a Fever muſt be a *bad* man; he who has a very high Fever, ſo as to be delirious, is a *very* bad man; but he who dies of a Fever, is an *abominable* wretch. Now if this method of reaſoning deſerves only to be laugh'd at, then *Auguſtus Toplady's* argument requires the ſame treatment.

This gentleman adds, "*I cannot help it.*" To which this writer only anſwers; 'Right: you 'cannot. But there is one that can. Apply to 'him.'—"*It is my nature.*"—'Very true: *And I could not prevent my having this nature.*'—"I never imagined you could."—'*Neither can I change it.*'—"I "am clear you cannot. The Æthiopian might as "ſoon change his ſkin, or the leopard his ſpots."—

But I aſk, does all this prove, that the evil which is in a man is his own fault, even though he could never help it? Can any one imagine that this writer thought, in theſe anſwers, that he was proving this point? And if not, pray what was he proving? All theſe aſſertions are adduced by the gentleman, as proofs that the feeling wrong tempers in himſelf was not his fault, namely for the reaſons he alledges; our author was to ſhew, that theſe reaſons do not prove the gentleman's point; but inſtead of this, he grants

* Page 150.

grants every one of them as true, and then only asks; "Yet, what will become of you, if you die "*unchanged?*"—To which I answer, it is impossible for him, or any other person to die, without *a possibility* of being *changed*; *for the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men.* So that if he or any other person die *unchanged*, it then strictly and properly becomes their own fault, because their sin hath been their free choice: and salvation has been their deliberate and repeated refusal.—He goes on:

"Mr. Wesley's wrath is not confined to the two "gentlemen above-mentioned. It strides back in- "to the last century, and prosecutes the assembly "of Divines met at *Westminster*.—For what offence "are they thus dug out of their graves? For say- "ing, that "*Whatever happens in time was unchange- "ably ordained from all eternity?*"—I beg leave to "acquaint the court, that there is a flaw in the "charge. Mr. *Wesley* cannot quote even a single "proposition without *mangling* and *altering*."

But let us candidly enquire, how this heavy charge is supported? Why, "In the confession "drawn up by these Divines, they express the mat- "ter thus:——"*GOD from all eternity, did—freely "and unchangeably ordain, whatsoever comes to pass.*" "—In their larger Catechism, they phrase it, with "no alteration of sense, as follows: "GOD's *De- "crees are the wise, free, and holy acts of the counsel "of his Will; whereby, from all eternity he hath for "his own glory, unchangeably fore-ordained whatsoever "comes to pass in time.*"—Now, let the candid, im-

" partial Reader judge, of this matter, *John Wesley's* " words are, " Whatever happens in time, was un- " changeably determined from all eternity." The words in the Assembly's Catechism are, " *GOD's* " *Decrees are the—Acts whereby, from all eternity* " *he hath — unchangeably fore-ordained whatsoever* " *comes to pass in time.*"

Now, if these two propositions do not express the *same sense*, I freely confess I do not understand the meaning of words. And John Wesley did not say, he quoted the words *verbatim*; nay he took care to prevent the reader from supposing it, by saying, " They speak to this *effect.*" I beg leave therefore, to recall this gentleman's information, and to acquaint the court, that the sense of the Assembly's words is preserved complete and full, and that this gentleman's charge against John Wesley is only the effect of a base envy.

We come now to a decisive stroke indeed; an argument that must doubtless overturn *Arminianism* from its very foundation.

" Tis curious, (says this writer‡) to behold *Ar-* " *minians* themselves forced by stress of argument " to take refuge in the harbour of that *Necessity* " which at other times they so vehemently seek to " destroy. It is *necessary*, say they, that man's Will " should be *free*: for without Freedom, the Will " were no Will at all."

Truly, *Augustus Toplady*, thou hast the most excellent knack at an argument, of any man I ever met with!—This gentleman, you see, can argue, or backward or forward. He can prove *Necessity* by Freedom, and *Freedom* by Necessity. 'Tis all alike

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‡ Page 154.

to him. He can prove, the conclusion from any sort of premises, and the premises back again by the conclusion. It reminds me of a *fine* gentleman in a public room, who that he might appear like other folks, took up the Paper to look at the news for the day. Another gentleman sitting near him, and casting his eye on the paper, whisper'd to him; "Sir you have got it the *wrong* side up." 'Puh, puh, says he, no matter for that, 'tis all alike to me, *right* or *wrong*.'—Our fine gentleman for reading, and *Augustus Toplady* for arguing, I think may justly be classed together.

I find there is an anecdote yet to come, which is nearly as curious as the preceding argument. However I should not have thought it worth notice; as supposing it to have been cull'd out of the lumber of some *superannuated* heathen poet's imagination; but finding it has been mentioned in a *former* publication, it seems by the repetition, that our author is fond of it; and that he has picked up a few people some where, whom he endeavours to persuade to take this for a true picture of Arminianism. For the sake of these good folks, then, let us take a view of this curious conversation pieece.

"God does all he possibly can," (said the Armi-
"nian Philosopher) "to hinder moral and natural
"evil. But he cannot prevail. Men will not
"permit God to have this wish. Then the Deity,
"answered I, must certainly be a very unhappy
"Being.—Not unhappy in the least."—What!
"meet with a constant series of crosses; *thwarted* in
"his daily endeavours; disappointed of his wishes;

"*dis*-

" *disconcerted* in his plan of operations ; *defeated* of " his intentions ; *embarrassed* in his views ; and " actually *overpowered*, every moment of every " day, by numberless of the creatures he has made ; " and yet be *happy* under all this incessant series of " perplexing and mortifying circumstances ? "— " Yes : for he knows that in consequence of the " Free-will with which he has endued his rational " creatures, he himself must be disappointed of " his wishes, and defeated of his ends : and that " there is no help *for it*, unless he had made us " mere Machines. He therefore submits to Necessity, and does not make himself uneasy about it."

Such was the conversation between these two Philosphers ; (if this be a just representation of it‖) but I defy a wise man to tell, whether the premises, or the conclusion drawn from them, discover the greater ignorance of God and religion.

" God does all he possibly can, (said the Arminian Philosopher) to hinder moral and natural evil. " But he cannot prevail. Men will not permit God " to have his wish."

I can-

‖ For my own part, I freely confess, That I doubt the truth of every word of it. This writer has already given the world sufficient reason to doubt the authenticity of every thing he speaks concerning *John Wesley*, from which he can make any inference to that gentleman's prejudice. For this reason I doubt, whether this conversation ever existed, at least in the present form of it, but in our author's imagination.

For this reason also, I doubt the truth of what this gentleman peremptorily asserts§, either two or three times over ; namely,

§ Pages 10. and 201.

I cannot tell what the Arminian Philosopher, so called, might say; but I am sure Arminianism itself, i. e. the Arminian doctrine of Free-agency, says no such thing. It is as far from any such supposition as Necessity itself. It declares, as I have said before, that God governs men by laws suited to the nature and powers he has given them. And he neither *wills*, nor *wishes*, nor *endeavours* to govern men by any other method. And as he infallibly fore-knows how every man will *determine himself*, by the motives laid before him, so he can place every circumstance in such a manner, as infallibly to answer every design of his wise and gracious providence. He therefore can neither be *disappointed* of his wishes, nor *defeated* of his ends. This is the *real* and true representation of the doctrine of Arminianism on this subject.

But even supposing that any man was so weak as to assert, that God does all he *possibly* can, &c. yet it would not follow that, "then the Deity must be "a very *unhappy* Being." The Deity is completely happy

that, "*John Wesley* declares himself, and in print too, to be *the* "*greatest minister in the world.*" Now I confess, I have never seen any thing of this kind, in *John Wesley's* writings. And I believe there is no rule more sacred than this, among men of any character, that, when a charge of this nature is brought against an antagonist, it must, as we say, be supported with chapter and verse; otherwise, it bears such strong marks of forgery, and slander, that it generally rebounds back with redoubled force on its illiberal author. Now as *Augustus Toplady* has broke thro' this sacred rule, it is to be hoped, if any sense of honour, or any concern for his own dying character remain, that he will speedily clear himself of the just suspicion of so atrocious a crime.

happy, in, and from Himself. He can neither receive addition, nor suffer diminution in any of his attributes or perfections. His nature is wholly incapable of suffering from any creature. It is an odd way of arguing then, to say, if God *do so*, or if men act *thus* or *thus*, "then the Deity must be a very *unhappy* Being." It is supposing that God is *affected* by men, and by their circumstances, as one man is affected by another: that is, that He is a man as well as we are. It is the same absurdity therefore as if he should say, Because God is completely happy in himself, and is *incapable* of pain or uneasiness: He must be made very *unhappy* and *uneasy* by the irregular conduct of men.

Now from this view of the matter, I think, we may fairly conclude, that our two Philosophers were pretty well met, being nearly on a *par* with each other.

This writer seems to think, that our general defection from sound morals, is owing to a general disbelief of the doctrine of Necessity. I must beg leave, however, to think otherwise, and that for very weighty reasons. For what christian virtue does the belief of such a doctrine tend to promote? I never knew one person in my life who was bettered by espousing this opinion. But we have had many instances of persons, who, before they became of this sentiment, were humble, modest, generous, and open-hearted to all; but after they were established in this grand gospel doctrine, (as 'tis called) they became haughty, disdainful, supercilious, and self-conceited. 'Tis the general character of all who

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are grounded in this opinion. The author before us, is a lamentable instance of it. In low invective, mean comparisons, and supercilious scorn, he is equalled by few, exceeded perhaps by none. In all his preaching, and religious parade, we have too much reason to fear, that he is actuated chiefly by envy or malice. He seems to preach Christ indeed for contention. *John Wesley* is the butt of all his rage, whose name he cannot mention, but

———*Lingua est suffusa veneno.*
Ovid.

and on which occasion he deems no language too mean, no comparison too low. But moderate men will think otherwise, and view things in a different light. They will pity the low motives that actuate this writer, and think, that whatever *John Wesley* be, this gentleman's *spirit* and *manner* can only convince the world that he himself is a very improper man, to teach the holy doctrines, and recommend the humble Spirit, of the meek and lowly Jesus.

But if this *grand gospel* tenet, have such a baneful influence, on the minds of those, who were antecedently good, what effect can it have on those who are pre-disposed to evil, by bad inclinations and vicious habits? Tell these, they act only from Necessity; that they do nothing but what God *wills*, and *appoints* them to do; that the Deity neither *wills* nor *wishes*, they should act otherwise than they do:—Will this tend to humble them before God for their sins? Can this tend to beget that pathetic cry, God be merciful to *me* a sinner? Or will it tend

tend to convince them that they are *poor* and *blind* and *naked*, loſt and undone without Chriſt? Can any one believe it will have this effect? Muſt it not harden the ſinner in his wickedneſs; and lull the ſoul, beginning to awake, to ſound ſleep? It will take away all remorſe, all ſelf-condemnation and blame. The ſinner will juſtly anſwer. I cannot, I need not repent. What! repent for doing what God has *appointed* me to do? for obeying the will and decrees of my Maker? this itſelf would be a ſin. If I am acting up to the *appointment* of the Deity: if I am fully anſwering all the *deſigns* of Providence concerning me. I am as perfect in my kind and degre, as the higheſt Arch-angel in heaven. No creature can, no creature is required to do more. The *will* of God is the moſt perfect rule of right, and the ſum of all good. The creature that fully, and uniformly does this, needs no repentance. And if it can never do any other thing than what God *wills* and appoints it to do, it needs no prayer, ſeeing it can *have* nothing more, nor loſe what it has.

What then can we think of a doctrine, which tends to quiet men in their ſins? which ſhuts up the very door of repentance, by ſuperſeding the need of it: That tells the ſinner, who tramples on the laws of God, and is pulling vengeance on his head, that he is doing juſt what God wills and appoints him to do? Is not this leading men to hell, under the name of heaven? telling them, all is ſafe and well, (for what can be better than the appointment of God) while the wrath of heaven is

juſt

juſt kindling, to conſume them for their ſins? I freely confeſs, I look upon ſuch men as doing the work of the devil in the name of the Lord. And both the doctrine and ſtate, of theſe fiery zealots, is *terribly* dangerous.

This however is not the character of all who are of this opinion. There are moderate men even of this ſentiment: Men, who are influenced by a ſpirit of *love* and *good-will* toward all mankind; who are more concerned to *feel* the Divine Spirit of love and goodneſs ariſe and prevail in themſelves, than to kindle the fire and contention among others. With theſe of every denomination, I can join my hand in friendſhip, and rejoice in their proſperity and ſucceſs. And in proportion as this Spirit prevails among us, we ſhall be reclaimed to the Goſpel and to Virtue; but not by eſpouſing a particular opinion. May the GREAT GOD ariſe, and by his power prevail in our hearts: May he give us the wiſdom that is from above, which is pure and peaceable. May he turn our attention to the inward ſtate of our mind, and beget in us an expectation and waiting, for the ariſing and manifeſtation of Chriſt in his redeeming power to the ſoul: Then ſhall we know what this meaneth; *We all with open face beholding as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame Image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord.*

FINIS.

fail kindling, to consume them for their fire? I freely confess, I look upon such men as doing the work of the devil in the name of the Lord. And both the doctrine and fate, of such teachers, is mighty dangerous.

This however is not the character of all who are of this opinion. There are moderate men even of this sentiment: Men, who are influenced by a spirit of love and good-will toward all mankind; who are more concerned to see the Divine Spirit of love and goodness rule and prevail in themselves, than to kindle the fire and contention among others. With those of every denomination, I can join my hand in friendship, and rejoice in their prosperity and success. And in proportion as this Spirit prevails among us, we shall be reclaimed to the Gospel and to Virtue; but not by opposing a particular opinion. May the GREAT God arise, and by His power prevail in our hearts: May he give us the wisdom that is from above, which is pure and peaceable. May he turn our attention to the inward face of our minds, and beget in us an expectation and waiting, for the calling and manifestation of Christ in his redeeming power to the soul: Then shall we know what this meaneth: We all with open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same glory, as by the spirit of the Lord.